United Nations S/PV.6192

Security Council

Sixty-fourth year

Provisional

6192nd meeting

Friday, 25 September 2009, 11.20 a.m.

New York

President:	Ms. Rice	(United States of America)
Members:	Austria	Mr. Mayr-Harting
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Koúdougou
	China	Mr. Liu Zhenmin
	Costa Rica	Mr. Urbina
	Croatia	Mr. Vilović
	France	Mr. De Rivière
	Japan	Mr. Miyajima
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Gouider
	Mexico	Mr. Heller
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Turkey	Mr. Apakan
	Uganda	Mr. Rugunda
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Quarrey
	Viet Nam	Mr. Bui The Giang

Agenda

Letter dated 22 September 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2009/487)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506.

09-52505 (E)

Please recycle

The meeting was called to order at 11.20 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Letter dated 22 September 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2009/487)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Brazil, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Amorim (Brazil) took a seat at the Council table.

The President: On behalf of the Council, I extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. Celso Luiz Nunes Amorim, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Brazil.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in response to a letter dated 22 September 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations, contained in document S/2009/487. I also wish to draw the attention of Council members to a letter dated 23 September 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations, which will be issued as document S/2009/491.

At this meeting, the Council will hear a statement by His Excellency Mr. Celso Luiz Nunes Amorim, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Brazil. I now give him the floor.

Mr. Amorim (Brazil): I wish to thank the Security Council for having promptly granted the request of the Brazilian Government for the convening of this urgent meeting.

As Council members are aware, President José Manuel Zelaya of Honduras has taken shelter, together with family members and his closest advisers, at the chancellery of the Brazilian Embassy in Tegucigalpa since Monday, 21 September. President Zelaya arrived at the Embassy peacefully and by his own means. He was received in his legitimate capacity as constitutional President of Honduras. He remains there under the protection of the Brazilian Embassy.

As soon as I learned of President Zelaya's arrival at the Embassy, I called him personally, on the instructions of President Lula. He told me that he had gone back to his country with the aim of returning to power by peaceful means and through dialogue. Since then, I have had no reason to doubt his words.

Since the day that the Brazilian Embassy first sheltered President Zelaya on its premises, the Embassy has been virtually under siege. It has been subjected to acts of harassment and intimidation by the de facto authorities. Electricity, water supply and phone connections were cut off. Cell phone communications were blocked or interfered with. Disruptive sound equipment was installed in front of the Embassy. Access to food was severely restricted at some point. The circulation of official vehicles of the Brazilian Embassy was curtailed.

The Chargé d'affaires of Brazil has, in practice, been prevented from moving from the chancellery to the residence, since the police have announced that anyone leaving the Embassy premises will not be allowed to return. In fact, the wife of the Chargé d'affaires, who left the premises, was not allowed to come back. These measures by the de facto authorities clearly violate obligations under the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations.

I recall that the International Court of Justice established long ago the inviolability of diplomatic missions as a standing principle of international relations, to be respected in all circumstances, including a breach of diplomatic relations or even war.

I wish to thank the Governments, organizations and groups that provided means to alleviate the siege of the Brazilian Embassy or expressed their condemnation of the actions taken against the Embassy.

The Brazilian Government is gravely concerned that the same people who perpetrated the coup d'état in Honduras might threaten the inviolability of the Embassy in order to forcefully arrest President Zelaya.

That is not mere suspicion or speculation; concrete indications of this possibility have been received.

First, the decision was taken to send a bailiff to the Embassy with a search warrant. Of course, the Brazilian officials refused to receive the warrant, and the bailiff was not allowed to enter our premises. The regime also made a change in the formal treatment of the Embassy, by which they seemed to imply that it had ceased to enjoy diplomatic status. In addition to making public statements to the same effect, the de facto Government sent a communication directly to the Ministry of External Relations, in which it referred to our Embassy as "one of the facilities that the Brazilian Government still maintains in Tegucigalpa". Of course, all of this seemed to be a prelude to further action.

In a public communiqué, the de facto authorities even tried to deny responsibility for the safety of President Zelaya and for damage to property in the Embassy's neighbourhood. That is in total contradiction with the Vienna Convention and, more immediately, with the recent ruling by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights that the de facto Government of Honduras must not threaten the safety and security of President Zelaya or any of those sheltered at the Brazilian Embassy.

It is imperative to ensure that the regime in Honduras fully respects and complies with the Vienna Convention regarding the Brazilian Embassy, in particular its inviolability and the security of its personnel and other people within its premises. Brazil categorically rejects all threats against our Embassy and against the safety of President Zelaya and all those under our protection.

I understand that, by calling this meeting, the Security Council recognizes that the situation of the Embassy of Brazil in Honduras constitutes a threat to the peace and security of our region. Any action against the Embassy of Brazil, its personnel or the people under our protection must therefore be considered a flagrant breach of security.

My country supports dialogue based on the relevant resolutions of the Organization of American States and the efforts made by President Oscar Arias of Costa Rica. Brazil is a firm supporter of the United Nations Charter. It is also a firm supporter of democracy and of the peaceful settlement of disputes. As such, it could not deny protection to a democratically elected President recognized by the entire international community as the only legitimate ruler of Honduras.

A clear statement from the Security Council would certainly serve as a deterrent against the further aggravation of this crisis. It would also be a sign of support for the diplomatic efforts of the international community aimed at the peaceful and speedy restoration of President Zelaya to power.

We sincerely hope that today's meeting is duly understood in Honduras as a sign that acts of disrespect against the Embassy of Brazil must cease immediately. It is our opinion that the Council should remain seized of this matter as long as that does not happen.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion of the subject.

The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.6193

Security Council

Sixty-fourth year

Provisional

6193rd meeting

Tuesday, 29 September 2009, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Ms. Rice	(United States of America)
Members:	Austria	Mr. Mayr-Harting
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Yoda
	China	Mr. Liu Zhenmin
	Costa Rica	Mr. Urbina
	Croatia	Mr. Vilović
	France	Mr. Joyandet
	Japan	Mr. Takasu
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Gebreel
	Mexico	Mr. Heller
	Russian Federation	Mr. Dolgov
	Turkey	Mr. Apakan
	Uganda	Mr. Rugunda
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Parham
	Viet Nam	Mr. Le Luong Minh

Agenda

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

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09-53141 (E)

Please recycle

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

The President: On behalf of the Council, I wish to acknowledge the presence in the Chamber of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Regional Cooperation of Burkina Faso, His Excellency Mr. Bedouma Alain Yoda, and the Minister of State for Cooperation and Francophonie of France, His Excellency Mr. Alain Joyandet.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Following consultations among the members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

> "The Security Council reiterates its full support to the Ouagadougou political process and to the electoral timeline endorsed by all the main Ivorian political actors, leading to the first round of open, free, fair and transparent presidential elections on 29 November 2009. It commends the Facilitator, President Blaise Compaore of Burkina Faso, for his continued efforts to support the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire.
>
> "The Security Council further reiterates its determination to bring its full support to a credible electoral process and highlights the importance of an inclusive participation of the Ivorian civil society. It stresses that, to this end, it has extended the mandate and has maintained the troop level of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) in its resolution 1880 (2009). It further stresses that it expressed in this resolution its intention to authorize the Secretary-General to redeploy troops as may be needed between the United Nations Mission in Liberia and UNOCI.
>
> "The Security Council expresses its concern at the delay in publication of the provisional voters list, and highlights that further delays in the publication of the voters list may put at risk the timeline for open, free, fair and transparent presidential elections.
>
> "The Security Council reiterates that the Ivorian political actors are bound to respect the electoral timeline. It urges all Ivorian actors to comply fully with their commitments in order for the voters list to be published as soon as possible in the framework of a transparent and inclusive process. It recalls that the Special Representative of the Secretary-General will certify the voters list explicitly.
>
> "The Security Council will review the situation by 15 October 2009. It expresses its intention to react as appropriate, consistent with resolution 1880 (2009), towards those who would block the progress of the electoral process.
>
> "The Security Council further expresses its intention to start considering the future direction of UNOCI by reviewing by 15 October its mandate and the benchmarks for a possible drawdown of the operation, in particular in light of the progress of the electoral process."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2009/25.

I shall now give the floor to members of the Council who wish to make statements.

Mr. Yoda (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): Burkina Faso welcomes the international community's continued interest in the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire. We would like to express our encouragement and gratitude to various partners, in particular the United Nations for its outstanding role in the implementation of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement and its supplementary agreements.

We believe that today's political, social and economic environment in Côte d'Ivoire is a cause for optimism concerning a definitive resolution of the crisis. The smooth implementation of the identification and registration effort, which was completed on 30 June 2009, the ongoing work on the electoral register with a view to the upcoming publication of the provisional electoral list, and the current pre-campaign electoral atmosphere in the country are all signs of a return to peace. The relevant recommendations emanating from the fifth meeting of the Permanent Consultative Framework and from the seventh meeting of the Evaluation and Monitoring Committee, which

were held in Ouagadougou on 18 May and 9 August 2009, respectively, have provided impetus to the implementation of the Political Agreement.

Significant progress has been made in numerous areas thanks to the resolve of political stakeholders in Côte d'Ivoire. Efforts are continuing to implement various measures provided for in the Ouagadougou Political Agreement and its supplementary agreements.

Adhering to the entirety of the electoral timeline for the holding of the first round of presidential elections on 29 November 2009, as scheduled by Côte d'Ivoire's political leaders, continues to be the main challenge to the peace process. However, the upcoming publication of the provisional electoral list illustrates that there is still room for hope. The basic goal remains the holding of credible, free, transparent, democratic and indisputable elections that will allow Côte d'Ivoire to overcome the crisis once and for all. To that end, it is crucial to focus on the essential tasks that arise in the run-up to elections.

In that regard, there should be special focus on how potential disputes over the provisional electoral list are handled. It is also imperative to provide the Integrated Command Centre with the necessary means to implement the comprehensive programme for elections security.

With regard to certifying the electoral process, we welcome the commitment of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Côte d'Ivoire to continuing to fully exercise the mandate conferred upon him by the Security Council. We assure him of the readiness of the facilitation to pursue relations of good cooperation with him in order to ensure the holding of free, open, transparent and democratic elections. However, properly resolving pending military issues, ensuring the re-establishment of State administration throughout the country, and securing financial support for the holding of elections and demobilization efforts are crucial to the success of the elections.

The results to date in the implementation of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement have been very encouraging. Nevertheless, there are still many complex challenges to be overcome in order to achieve the ultimate goal. However, they are not insurmountable so long as the political will of Ivorian political stakeholders to work towards peace continues. We are therefore convinced that the date of 29 November continues to be viable.

The recent official visit to Côte d'Ivoire by President Blaise Compaore, President of Burkina Faso and Facilitator of the inter-Ivorian dialogue, was an opportunity to take note of the determination of Ivorian political actors to hold the elections on the scheduled date. In that regard, the Facilitator foresees the holding of a meeting of the Permanent Consultative Framework in mid-November in order to provide decisive impetus to the electoral process. I take this opportunity to reiterate the gratitude of the Facilitator to the entire international community for its support of the peace process.

Respect for the full electoral timeline requires the mobilization of all stakeholders concerned in order to carry out the tasks set out therein within the deadlines established. Burkina Faso calls on the international community, and in particular the Security Council, to pursue its efforts and to support the process to end the crisis to its conclusion. We are prepared to join our efforts with those of the international community and all Ivorian stakeholders in order to succeed together in returning peace to Côte d'Ivoire.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the delegation of France for its preparation of the presidential statement, which Burkina Faso fully supports.

Mr. Joyandet (France) (*spoke in French*): Before turning to Côte d'Ivoire, I would like to share with the Security Council France's outrage following the events in Conakry, Guinea, where members of the military fired on a peaceful crowd, killing and wounding many dozens of people. The situation in that country is especially worrisome.

With regard to the situation in Côte d'Ivoire, I would first like to thank you, Madam President, for having organized this ministerial-level meeting. I should also like to thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Burkina Faso for his statement and his decisive efforts alongside President Compaore to facilitate the peace process in that country. The period ahead will be decisive for the proper holding of presidential elections — the date of which, 29 November 2009, was set by Ivorians themselves.

Both the people of Côte d'Ivoire and the entire international community look forward to those

elections, as underscored in resolution 1880 (2009), which was adopted on 30 July. The statement just read out by the President, along with today's meeting itself, provide us an opportunity to recall the importance that all of us attach to the holding of the elections in the most democratic and secure manner possible. This is also an opportunity to assure Côte d'Ivoire of the attention, support and mobilization of the entire international community, and of France in particular, to that end.

Progress has been made that gives rise to optimism with regard to the desire of the parties in Côte d'Ivoire to close the chapter on the crisis by preparing for the holding of elections. I see at least three reasons for that hope. First, registration operations were concluded on 30 June, while the identification process is under way.

Secondly, the period for the submission of candidacies to the Independent Electoral Commission began on 26 August. Many candidacies have already been submitted. Following my visit on the ground, I should like to confirm that there is indeed an atmosphere of election campaigning in the country.

Lastly, statements by various political and technical protagonists setting out their determination and commitment to the elections should be commended. I note that President Gbagbo indicated to the General Assembly on 25 September that the process has entered an irreversible phase.

The commitments of the various Ivorian actors must now lead to new, decisive progress in the electoral process on the ground within the timeline identified. That will involve, first and foremost, the publication of the provisional electoral list, which was originally scheduled for 29 August but has already been postponed twice, first until mid-September and then to early October. The decrees of 25 August provide for the possible publication of both the provisional and the final electoral lists by 31 October and 15 November, respectively.

The delay in the publication of the provisional list would not be a problem in itself if the quality of the list should enable us to save time at later stages. It is worrisome, however, because it constitutes an impediment to the electoral timeline and a risk factor for the entire process. The electoral process must not be slowed down, but move forward resolutely in full respect for procedure. I therefore invite all technical and political actors to spare no effort in publishing a credible, high-quality electoral list as soon as possible and, obviously, without shortcuts that might impute the fairness of the elections. An electoral list accepted by all is essential to the success of the elections.

Moreover, providing security for the elections is critical to the successful conduct of a free, transparent and democratic ballot. Although progress has been made recently and the first deployment of mixed units under integrated command has begun, it is important that the Ivorian parties find concrete solutions and make further progress on this issue by 29 November. The presidential elections are indeed the first priority, although we must not lost sight of the main long-term objectives, which are the effective restoration of State authority and the redeployment of the administration throughout the territory of Côte d'Ivoire.

Ivorians do not stand alone in their efforts. They can rely on the support of the international community — including, of course, of France — the Secretariat and, in Abidjan, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Côte d'Ivoire, Mr. Choi, to whom we reiterate our gratitude and support. His role in certifying the electoral process is critical to guaranteeing the fairness of the elections. I recall that the Security Council has provided for Mr. Choi's explicit certification of the electoral list. The United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire, under his leadership, is providing strengthened security and logistical assistance to the Ivorian authorities as the elections approach.

France also reiterates its support for the facilitator, President Blaise Compaore of Burkina Faso, whose role is essential to encouraging the Ivorian parties to transcend existing obstacles. President Compaore's recent visit to Côte d'Ivoire also reaffirmed the links of friendship between the two countries, which we welcome, and the broad convergence of views regarding the need to advance in the preparations for the elections. France, as always, remains steadfast at Côte d'Ivoire's side during this key period for the future of the country. The earliest possible convening of incontestable elections is an essential condition for overcoming the crisis and restoring lasting peace and stability in the country and throughout the subregion.

The logistical and technical obstacles are numerous. That is no surprise, given the many years of

crisis. However, those obstacles will be overcome only through the political resolve of the Ivorian parties themselves. The United Nations is firmly committed to Côte d'Ivoire, but the Security Council cannot indefinitely support the process to end the crisis unless elections are held and the more than 8,000 military and civilian staff are maintained. The presidential election of 2009 will thus be a genuine test of credibility in the eyes of the Security Council and of the international community as a whole. I stress in that regard that Côte d'Ivoire has the capacity to meet these challenges and to turn a very painful page in its history.

The President: There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 10.25 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.6194

Security Council

Sixty-fourth year

Provisional

6194th meeting

Tuesday, 29 September 2009, 10.25 a.m.

New York

President:	Ms. Rice/Ms. DiCarlo	(United States of America)
Members:	Austria	Mr. Mayr-Harting
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Tiendrébéogo
	China	Mr. Liu Zhenmin
	Costa Rica	Mr. Guillermet
	Croatia	Mr. Vilović
	France	Mr. Araud
	Japan	Mr. Takasu
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Dabbashi
	Mexico	Mr. Heller
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Turkey	Mr. Davutoğlu
	Uganda	Mr. Rugunda
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Parham
	Viet Nam	Mr. Le Luong Minh

Agenda

The situation in Afghanistan

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security (S/2009/475)

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09-53153 (E)

Please recycle

The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

Tribute to Ms. Norma Chan, Chief of the Security Council Secretariat Branch

The President: Before we begin our discussion on Afghanistan and I give the floor to Special Representative Eide, I should like to take a few minutes to pay tribute to Ms. Norma Chan, Chief of the Security Council Secretariat Branch. Many of us know and some of us, myself included, have been in denial about the fact that Norma is retiring tomorrow after a career that has spanned 36 years at the United Nations.

Sometimes referred to as the sixth permanent member, Norma is an institution within the Security Council. She joined the Security Council Affairs Division in May 1978. Apart from three years in Vienna, she has served the Council continuously since that time. That means that Norma has worked with more than 100 different Member States and more than 330 Security Council presidents — an unprecedented and unparalleled record that is unlikely to be broken.

But it is not only the length of her service that is extraordinary, but also the skill, professionalism and integrity she brings to this job every day. Norma has been here to guide the Council during pivotal moments and to ensure that every day the work gets done, and done properly.

Numerous presidents, prime ministers, hundreds of foreign ministers and thousands of permanent representatives from Council members and non-members alike have benefited from her wise advice and expert counsel, as I have every day this month. As a new ambassador, I relied on Norma to help me with the ins and outs of Council meetings — the precedents, the procedures — and how to master and fine-tune her famous scripts for formal meetings.

Many people spend their last month before retirement enjoying celebratory lunches and dinners and wrapping things up, but not Norma. In her last month, she has worked as hard as ever, helping us prepare for the fifth summit in the Council's history, and once again Norma applied her unflagging professionalism, energy and enthusiasm for the Council. In her attention to detail, she revved up her team and made it all happen.

So to Norma we offer our deep gratitude for her dedication and service to the Council, to us and to advancing global peace and security. Her well-deserved retirement is a deep loss for all of us, but we share in her joy about the new adventures ahead for her.

I ask my fellow Council members to please join me in extending very best wishes and thanks to Norma Chan for her remarkable service in the interest of global peace and security and her dedication to the United Nations Security Council's vital work.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Afghanistan

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security (S/2009/475)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Afghanistan, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Spantâ (Afghanistan) took a seat at the Council table.

The President: On behalf of the Council, I extend a warm welcome to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan, His Excellency Mr. Rangin Dâdfar Spantâ.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Kai Eide, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan.

It is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2009/475, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Kai Eide, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan.

I now give the floor to Mr. Eide.

Mr. Eide: This is certainly decision-time in Afghanistan and for Afghanistan. As we look out over the next few weeks, we can see how many critical decisions are ahead of us. Together, they will determine the prospects for success in ending a conflict that has become more intense over the last few months. Let me just mention a few of these decisions.

First of all, of course, the final results from the 20 August elections will be determined and then certified. Then the future president will have to compose his Government and decide on his political agenda. Among those decisions will be how to launch a process of peace and reconciliation. Decisions will have to be made on the future size and composition of the international military forces as well as Afghan security forces. Finally, decisions must be made concerning priorities and the allocation of international development assistance.

Faced with such important decisions, I must emphasize that doing more of the same is simply not an option any more. It is simply not an option. We must, in a way, change our mindset.

Nothing of what I would ask the Council to do is dramatically new. It has in fact been agreed. We talked about it, we read about it. It has been solemnly agreed in international documents. But there is one problem: we have not implemented it. If implemented, I believe that what we have committed ourselves to can have a tremendous impact on the ground. But if we do not implement it, if we shy away from difficult decisions, then the overall situation on the ground will continue to deteriorate.

First, I offer a few words about the elections. Yes, there has been fraud, and irregularities have been committed by election officials, by candidates and by their supporters, as well as by Government officials. The turn-out was low — almost as low as the elections for the European Parliament. But Afghanistan is a country in conflict. No other day since 2002 has seen so many security incidents as those we experienced on 20 August 2009.

Nevertheless, more polling stations opened than in elections in 2004 and 2005. The security forces and the Independent Election Commission (IEC) did their utmost to provide access for voters. As I say, they did so in a country that is not only in conflict, but has weak institutions, weak infrastructure and a huge illiterate population faced with a ballot paper containing 41 presidential candidates. That illustrates the complexity of the matter.

I would like to emphasize a few positive elements that we should not forget. The election campaign was characterized by a public engagement that Afghanistan had never seen before. There was a real debate between political alternatives that the people of Afghanistan had never previously witnessed. In my view, this strong public engagement proves that the Afghan people wanted these elections. They wanted to continue the democratic processes in this country.

Two weeks ago, many believed that we were almost at the verge of collapse in the election process. But it has been kept on track. The IEC and the Electoral Complaints Commission (ECC) have worked together during these final stages. With the assistance of experts brought in from abroad, an audit process has been agreed to determine the level of fraud and then the final results. The ballot boxes will all now be brought to Kabul so that the final audit can take place.

This process is at every stage in accordance with international standards. It has been used in other complex elections. It should enable us to have a credible and legitimate result. At the same time, this audit process will enable us to determine the final result in a short period of time. That means that a second round, if required, could be held before winter sets in, thereby avoiding a lengthy period of political vacuum and instability.

We have been assisted by some of the most experienced persons one can possibly find in this world, in electoral processes and statistics and so on, in addition to the excellent people that we have on the ground. The challenge of the ECC will now be to determine and reject fraudulent vote ballots while at the same time avoiding disenfranchisement of voters who have cast their votes in good faith and in an

Afghan cultural environment where many people had never seen a ballot paper and had never used a pen.

When the final result has been certified, it must be respected by candidates and their supporters. What most Afghans by far now want is to see the process come to an end, a Government formed and their lives improved. Then the important decisions must be taken by the future Afghan president. That means, first of all, appointing a Government that can inspire the people and enjoy its confidence. That will also be a first important and necessary signal to the international community and will help consolidate the commitment of the public in donor and troop-contributing countries. At this point in time, with the increasing debate about Afghanistan in the international community, such a signal is of vital importance.

Furthermore, we can no longer allow the warlords and power brokers of the past, and their policy of fragmentation, to contaminate the institutions of the future. We need a unity of purpose and a sharing of responsibility that have so far been lacking. Of course, eliminating the influence of the fragmenting forces of the past cannot be done overnight. But these forces must also understand that in a conflict that is expanding in scope and intensity, they will be expected to step back from their policies of fragmentation and personal interests.

Local and regional power brokers cannot be allowed to hinder efforts to build a coherent Afghanistan and thereby offer opportunities that insurgents can exploit. In this respect, also, the international community has an important role to play; instead of paying tribute to and enriching those who oppose the Government with undemocratic and illegitimate means, we must make it clear that the alternative to unity of purpose is marginalization.

The second challenge for the future President will be to formulate an agenda that truly corresponds to the concerns of the people. Better governance at the provincial and district levels, an intensified struggle against corruption, strengthened respect for the rule of law, bringing an end to the culture of impunity and promoting social and economic justice must be prominent parts of this agenda. And I must stress that we need a new compact between the Afghan Government and its people. That compact will also be the cornerstone of a renewed commitment by the international community to Afghanistan.

I am often asked if there should be conditionality in our assistance. There is, in my view, a de facto conditionality; the decisions of donors and troop-contributing countries are not made around summit tables, not around Government tables, nor even around the Security Council table. They are made around the kitchen tables and in the living rooms where public opinion is shaped. And the strength of that public support in the international community depends on the readiness of the Afghan Government to come closer to the concerns of its people. The future Afghan Government must understand that fully.

Important decisions will also be required by the international community. On the security side, General McChrystal has now presented his assessment. It is clear, straightforward and demanding. His main themes are the need to change the operational culture and get closer to the people, to improve unity of effort and to focus the resources and effectiveness of the Afghan national security forces. I welcome his assessment, not least his emphasis on cultural sensitivity and the need to develop a different relationship with the population in many areas.

I do not want to comment on the debate over the need for additional international fighting forces, but I do want to comment on the longer-term perspective. We agree that there is a need to improve the strength and capacity of the Afghan army and police. The increase in the army is ahead of schedule and could reach the goal of 135,000 personnel by October of next year. That is encouraging, though a further and significant increase will be required in subsequent years, but if the army is to take greater responsibility and conduct independent operations, much more than numbers will be required. Decisions concerning the procurement of equipment and weapons will have to be taken soon. More international troops for training and mentoring will be required.

The situation with the police is similar. A decision to increase the number of police officers to around 140,000 should be taken, in my view, before the end of the year. But again, it is not merely a question of numbers. The current attrition rate in the Afghan police is between 20 and 25 per cent. That illustrates the need for better training, better equipment and better incentives.

All this — the training and equipping of the police and army — cannot be a United States effort

alone. There must be a much wider engagement. I therefore appeal strongly to other contributing countries to step up their efforts in the area of manpower as well as financial resources, and I did the same to defence ministers of the European Union three hours ago by video link to Sweden.

On the civilian side, I see two main areas that must be given urgent priority. The first is institution-building. If the Afghan Government is to connect better with its population, a huge institution programme is needed. I have said this before, and I insist on it. It can be divided into five components, and I do so to illustrate the complexity of the problem.

First, with respect to training and education for current and future civil servants, some structures and institutions exist, but they must be expanded and improved. Today, 25 per cent of district governors — one in four — are either uneducated or have only primary education. Secondly, as regards the building of subnational infrastructure, today half of the district governors have no office, two thirds have no power supply and one third has no vehicles. Thirdly, we must build an information technology network that enables provincial and district governors to communicate better with their employers in Kabul, and thereby also link up to Afghan national development plans. Fourthly, incentives must be strengthened. The fact that a district governor may earn $60 a month makes it difficult to attract competent people to dangerous districts. And, of course, there must be stronger emphasis on merit-based appointments and accountability.

Yes, the Government must demonstrate, soon and in concrete terms, a readiness to fight corruption and strengthen its institutions. But the responsibility for building viable and accountable governance is one we must share. The shortcomings I have just mentioned illustrate the complexity of the problem and the fact that we must have realistic expectations as to how fast we can go forward.

The second priority is sustainable economic development. I understand the growing impatience in the international community and the need to demonstrate results for all the sacrifices that have been made and resources committed. However, this impatience must not lead us to accelerated pressure for quick-impact results that can easily turn into quick-collapse projects. If that were to happen, it would distract us further from what is required for the sustainable economic development that will enable Afghanistan to rely increasingly on its own resources.

So we need a two-track approach — with doable projects in conflict areas, in agriculture, rural development, and so forth, that can visibly improve the quality of the lives of the people — and greater investments in long-term projects centred around growth engines and national resources in those parts of the country that can enhance revenue collection and gradually reduce dependence on foreign aid. Today, that balance is simply wrong, with too little resources and attention given to long-term investment. This will, in fact, lead to a situation where much of what we have been doing so far will, in a few years' time, become unsustainable.

At the G-8 meeting in Trieste, I presented proposals on behalf of the Government and the United Nations for two significant infrastructure projects: a railroad and an expanded electricity grid that would employ thousands of Afghans in the short term, and in the longer term enable Afghanistan to exploit its own rich mineral resources, not least the country's vast iron ore deposits. These projects would stimulate the private sector and provide engines for growth for significant parts of the country.

I think that, in this respect, the Afghans seem to be more advanced than we are. At the Special Envoy meeting in Paris earlier this month, I brought with me a paper elaborated by the Afghan Minister of Finance with the United Nations, proposing a reorganization of the efforts of the Afghan Government and its approach to strategic and economic development. It moves away from 17 inter-ministerial committees and proposes to establish three main clusters: agriculture and rural development, human resource development and infrastructure and economic growth. It represents a radical shift away from an unprioritized competition among ministers to a strategic approach to sustained economic growth. I wish we could follow, because today our aid bureaucracies are too rigid and lack the ability to respond to new and better policies.

Finally, I indicated initially that a new Government will have to develop and decide on a peace and reconciliation programme. Some — in particular in the international community — are talking about a reintegration programme distinct from a plan such as I mentioned. I would like to appeal for some caution. First, I am convinced that any such effort,

whatever we call it, must be an Afghan-elaborated and Afghan-led process. Second, the distinction between hard-core Taliban and those who can be brought over with a chequebook is indeed simplistic. I think we must analyze the insurgency better, how it is made up. Yes, there are irreconcilable insurgents. And yes, there are those who join the insurgency for financial reasons. But there are many who have joined the insurgency because they feel politically and socially alienated. That will require a political process, greater inclusiveness and a more effective justice system.

There are differences from region to region. The insurgency is truly a multi-causal issue and must be approached as such. Simplicity simply does not work. We can play a supporting role, but let us leave it to the Afghans to decide how to move forward.

There have been a number of calls for a new international conference on Afghanistan, and I support such calls. I believe that if security permits, the first such conference should be held at the ministerial level in Kabul. Such a conference, in the established JCMB format, would be a strong political signal and would underline that we are moving into a transition strategy where the main focus must be on a compact between the Afghan people and its Government, and where the Afghan Government assumes greater responsibilities for the future of its country, with the international community gradually in a more supporting role. That conference would be based on a new Government programme and would provide international support to it.

But I also believe we should look towards a broader conference to formulate in a wider sense the goals of our partnership for the years ahead, goals that are ambitious but at the same time realistic and realizable, and that would provide a roadmap for a mutual long-term commitment, four years after the Afghanistan Compact was concluded in London. It would centre around some of the themes I have mentioned: the Government's ability to assume the full responsibilities of a sovereign State, institution-building, economic development, a peace and reconciliation process and Afghanistan's future status in the region. It would mark the end of one phase of our relationship and the beginning of another.

Before I conclude, I would like to mention a few pieces of good news that have not received the attention they deserve.

First, we talk a lot about drug production, and rightly so. This year again, the area under opium cultivation dropped significantly, by 22 per cent, including a major drop in Helmand province. The volume of production was reduced by 10 per cent and the number of poppy-free provinces went up from 18 to 20. That is good news.

Second, in August, the young student named Parwez Kambaksh, who had been given a death sentence for downloading material concerning the interpretation of the Koran, was given a presidential amnesty on humanitarian grounds. This case had received global attention. He is now a free man.

Third, during the United Nations Peace Day, which we celebrated a few days ago, and the campaign around that day, 1.2 million children were vaccinated against polio. Only 3 per cent of the target group were not reached, mainly due to ongoing fighting. Thanks to the cooperation of all — including, I must say, the Taliban — access was obtained to areas that had been inaccessible in previous years. For us on the ground this is important good news, and even more for the children whose lives we may have saved.

The Council has received a set of benchmarks, as instructed in resolution 1868 (2009) (S/2009/475, annex). They are formulated following a debate in Kabul on whether they should be UNAMA-specific or of a more general nature. There was consensus on the latter. They represent a first attempt and can, of course, be further refined, following debate around this table and in Kabul.

The United Nations has, I believe, expanded its efforts in accordance with its mandate, not least in the coordination of political and development issues. That work will continue. Our ambition is still to continue to expand with new offices across the country. There is a need for a stronger coordinating effort, primarily in the areas of development and governance. I have therefore asked for additional resources for next year's budget in order to implement the mandate more fully. However, as I have said before, it is not only a question of the number of staff. We need specialized personnel, who are hard to find. I appeal to Council members for their continued support and for their assistance in finding the people we need in a challenging environment.

The President: I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan, His Excellency Mr. Rangin Dâdfar Spantâ.

Mr. Spantâ: Let me begin by congratulating you, Madam President, on your assuming the presidency of the Council for this month. I am grateful to you for convening this meeting. Afghanistan deeply appreciates the strong support and solidarity of the family of nations in its arduous struggle to stand on its feet after decades of conflicts and suffering. Specially, we are grateful for the excellent work and efforts of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). Our special thanks go to Ambassador Kai Eide and his able team. I am also thankful for his comprehensive report on the situation in my country.

I would like to brief the Council on our recent presidential and provincial council elections and the way forward. This will be somewhat complementary to Mr. Eide's efforts.

The August elections were important milestones in the processes of democratization and State-building in Afghanistan. They were a multifaceted undertaking, involving different entities and players. They included Afghan national security forces, the Independent Election Commission, the Electoral Complaints Commission, the Afghan media, United Nations agencies, national and international observers, Afghan civil society, the Afghan political community, the International Security Assistance Force and, of course, the Afghan citizens. It was the first time in the history of modern Afghanistan that Afghans had the opportunity to organize a nationwide election.

What made this election different from other elections was the degree of the threat to security. Al-Qaida, the Taliban and other terrorist groups did their utmost to disrupt the election. Painfully, we lost a number of our security forces, our international partners and Afghan civilians to terrorist attacks prior and during the election day.

Taking into account the socio-historic realities of my country, we passed this national test successfully. As with any emerging democracy, there were cases of irregularities. But in passing judgment, we should be aware of the context, the process and the full picture, rather than only one aspect or issue.

For the sake of the stability and consolidation of our nascent democratic institutions and process, it is imperative that all of us respect and support the forthcoming decisions from the Afghan electoral bodies. Continuing efforts to undermine the integrity and legitimacy of the process and our institutions will certainly result in a worsening of the situation, not only for Afghanistan but also for the international community.

Afghanistan is faced with challenges and needs that fall into four categories: stabilization, humanitarian concerns, reconstruction efforts and sustainable development. Only by pursuing a comprehensive long-term strategy can we consolidate the fragile advances we have made and the institutions we have built since 2001. Short-term, compartmentalized and partial solutions are doomed to fail.

The objective of such a strategy must be to help create a fully sustained and functioning State. The main pillars of this strategy are security, good governance, economic development, regional cooperation and international solidarity.

A comprehensive long-term strategy needs to be supported by adequate and appropriate resources and skills. To implement such a strategy, there needs to be a clearer division of responsibility between us and the international community. Afghanistan has to shoulder the main responsibility for creating a secure, prosperous, progressive and democratic Afghanistan.

The sustained and substantial support of the international community will be crucial in enabling us to realize our national priorities. We are very pleased with the placing of Afghanistan high among the priorities of the new United States Administration. We are confident that the surge in United States military support coupled with increased civilian and developmental assistance is the best way forward.

Afghanistan welcomes the proposal to convene an international conference on the situation in Afghanistan. We will be pleased to host it in Kabul. This conference will be an opportunity to renew our partnership and to outline specific and concrete steps and programmes. The conference will be an important forum for identifying effective ways to implement the Afghanistan National Development Strategy. Furthermore, it will provide an opportunity to discuss our mutual responsibilities and commitment to principles of good governance, mutual accountability, transparency, aid efficiency and enhanced coordination.

I should like to say a few words about the strategic issue of good governance. An accountable and functioning State is absolutely essential for addressing Afghanistan's short- and long-term needs and

challenges. However, it is a reductionist view to boil all our problems down to one issue. Terrorists are motivated by a set of factors, primarily their fanatical mindset and ideological ends.

In the context of Afghanistan, we often suffer from weak or, as Kai Eide mentioned, even absent governance, as well as bad governance. In many cases, we lack the basic tools required for governance. Rather than bashing and delegitimizing our young State institutions, we have to invest in our national institutions. Furthermore, it is wrong and unethical to ignore bad practice on the part of other actors, including within the donor community.

Another important issue is the question of re-integration of illegal fighters into civilian life. From the beginning, it has been our stated policy that Afghanistan belongs to all Afghan citizens. To this end, and in the context of the Afghan Constitution, we have used all means to encourage those Afghans who took up arms against their country to participate in the process of reconstructing their motherland. In the coming weeks and months, we will accelerate our efforts towards that end. To succeed in this endeavour, our efforts must be consistent with the ends that we envision for Afghanistan and the region. Secondly, as long as the leaders of the Taliban and other terrorist groups remain protected by external entities, we will not be able to achieve our goal of dismantling the dynamic of insecurity in my country. Any sustainable reintegration effort must focus on the leadership as well as non-ideological fighters.

Another important issue for Afghanistan is regional cooperation. For us, regional cooperation is a pillar of our foreign, security and development policy. We fully believe in the utility of economic peace in our region. Many of our challenges are regional in nature and consequence — in particular, terrorism and drug-trafficking. Only by creating a cooperative environment in the region can we collectively address our interrelated challenges. In this context, our relations with the Islamic Republic of Pakistan are of the utmost importance. Fortunately, in recent months, there has been a cooperative atmosphere between us and the new civilian Government in Pakistan. I should like to thank our friends for their support in bringing this bilateral relationship about through the trilateral meetings held in Washington, Ankara and Istanbul. It is our sincere wish to extend this to other entities in Pakistan. To this end, the international community must ensure that only good behaviour is rewarded.

In addressing all these issues, the United Nations has played and must continue to play a leading role. UNAMA is well placed to facilitate communication between us and our international partners and to bridge our mutual needs and expectations. Enhancing coordination among different stakeholders is another important role for UNAMA.

I should like to conclude by reiterating Afghanistan's full commitment and readiness to strengthen our relationships with our international partners. I am absolutely confident that with their support and solidarity, Afghanistan will resume its historical role and place as a model for cooperation among different cultures and as a crossroads for trade, transit and tourism in the region.

The President: I thank His Excellency Mr. Spantâ for his statement.

I shall now give the floor to Council members. I begin by giving the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Turkey, His Excellency Mr. Ahmet Davutoğlu.

Mr. Davutoğlu (Turkey): I would first like to express our appreciation to Ms. Norma Chan, who over the years has made a tremendous contribution to the work of the Council. During the short period of time of Turkey's membership in the Council, our mission has greatly appreciated her kind assistance and cooperation on every issue, and thus she will be sorely missed by all of us.

I would also like to thank Special Representative Kai Eide for his briefing, and I take this opportunity also to commend him and the staff of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan for the valuable work they have been doing in that country. I also welcome my dear friend Mr. Rangin Dâdfar Spantâ to the Council and offer, through him, our best wishes to the people of Afghanistan.

The Afghan people should receive our recognition for their tireless endeavours and commitment to democracy in their country. Every experience around the world shows that only the commitment and perseverance of the people can make democracy work.

In this regard, as we await the final results of the vote, let us take a moment to recognize that Afghanistan continues its journey towards becoming a vigorous democracy. We in the international community should extend our strong support for their pursuit. Whatever lessons exist must be identified and whatever issues arise must be addressed primarily by the independent Afghan authorities, and we should give our assistance and support to them.

Immense challenges that require urgent attention continue to exist on the ground and require the attention of the Government in Kabul. Winning hearts and minds is most important. Our messages to the President of Afghanistan for the next five years will be to embrace the whole proud Afghan nation and to work courageously for national reconciliation. We should continue to extend our cooperation to him and offer the helping hand of the international community.

Next year, Turkey will be the lead country in the Security Council on Afghanistan. We intend to build on the positive momentum created by Japan, with the assistance of the United Nations and other Security Council members.

Turkey is not an outsider in that geographic region. Historically, we have been a friend and brother to the people of Afghanistan. We have always been involved in one form or another, but always in support of our brothers and sisters in Afghanistan. Currently, Turkey is implementing its most comprehensive ever programme of assistance to Afghanistan. We will continue our intensive work to support reconstruction. Turkey is also active at the regional level, inter alia in the trilateral summit process.

Turkey believes that a four-pronged approach is necessary in Afghanistan. First, the international community and the Government of Afghanistan need to initiate a robust campaign for a massive and refocused economic reconstruction plan. Secondly, an effective and self-sufficient Afghan military and police should be created at a faster pace. Thirdly, the international community must encourage an inclusive national reconciliation process led by the Government of Afghanistan. And, last but not least, we must foster an environment conducive to democracy and development through modern education.

With these thoughts in mind, I particularly thank the Secretary-General for the report presented today and for his benchmarks, which are focused and achievable. I particularly welcome the fact that these benchmarks contain the most important five aspects of a comprehensive strategy — security, good governance, social and economic development, human rights and the fight against narcotics — which Turkey has always emphasized.

Let me close by again thanking the Special Representative and confirming Turkey's full confidence in and support for his work.

Mr. Takasu: Before proceeding, I would like to add my words of deep appreciation and warm regards to Norma Chan for her dedication.

I would like to thank Special Representative Kai Eide for his very frank and helpful remarks. Also, we are grateful to Minister Spantâ for his presence this morning. We are very grateful to the Secretary-General and the Special Representative's team in Kabul for preparing the most recent report of the Secretary-General (S/2009/475), containing benchmarks. As he has admitted, it is difficult to formulate benchmarks for a mission in such a complex situation, but they will serve as useful guidelines to track the progress in the country, which is now the focus of attention of all of us.

First of all, let me congratulate the people of Afghanistan, who cast their ballots in the recent historic elections under very intimidating circumstances. There is hardly any country in the world where it is more difficult to conduct elections now than Afghanistan. It must be stressed that the recent elections were the very first Afghan-led elections and included very strong public engagement.

Now that the votes have been cast, we expect the process to be completed with due process. We expect the Electoral Complaints Commission to handle properly the many complaints of fraud. The ongoing joint work of the Independent Election Commission and the Electoral Complaints Commission is reassuring, and we should have full confidence in their efforts to announce the certified results soon.

I would like to urge all concerned parties in Afghanistan to accept the certified results once they are announced. We encourage them to try to mend the political fissure that has been created by the electoral process and to promote a policy of inclusion under the new Government.

The next six months will be critical to defining the future course of Afghanistan. We must now look

ahead to the post-election strategy. Sustained international attention and assistance are needed now more than ever. In this light, I would like to reaffirm that the new Japanese Government will continue its intensive efforts to extend assistance to Afghanistan. Japan's strong commitment to the stability and reconstruction of Afghanistan is unchanged.

We also wish to see the newly elected Afghan Government demonstrate its determination to address forcefully the various challenges it faces — in particular the issue of good governance — and thereby gain trust both at home and abroad.

The proposed international conference will provide a valuable opportunity to confirm commitments on the parts of both the international community and the Government of Afghanistan. I would like to point out that the venue and modality of the conference will be decided in full consultation with the new Afghan Government. It is important to ensure that the Government take the lead in the preparation of the conference and demonstrate ownership in the outcome.

In the post-election strategy, the reintegration and reconciliation of insurgents are of critical importance. We should encourage political outreach towards those former insurgents who have forsaken violence and made a firm commitment to living peacefully within the framework of the Constitution.

We must remind ourselves that the reintegration effort must be led by the Afghan Government. The Government, at the national and local levels, must be regarded by the people as credible, strong and competent if such efforts are to be effective. Building on its experiences in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and in the disbandment of illegal and armed groups, Japan intends to contribute to these efforts, including by providing vocational training for those who have been reintegrated.

In r eting the diverse challenges in the country, a more focused and better-coordinated approach among donors is essential. Japan fully supports the efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in prioritizing and coordinating areas of assistance, and concurs with the areas he has identified to address. Agriculture, rural development, infrastructure and basic human needs are the areas on which Japan has been focusing its assistance, and we will continue to exert our efforts in those areas.

Major pledges have been made, but many of them still await implementation. I would like to emphasize that it is time to accelerate the implementation of pledges, as soon as the commitment is reaffirmed by the new Afghan Government.

Obviously, security is the biggest challenge and a prerequisite for all these efforts. Efforts at reintegration and reconciliation, for instance, must be carried out from a position of strength. We pay high tribute to those countries that are providing troops, many of which have experienced the loss of the precious lives of their personnel.

We also commend the performance of the Afghan security forces, particularly in the past few months. But clearly, much more needs to be done to further strengthen their national capacity. Japan has been supporting efforts to improve the national security capacity, including through assistance for the police payroll. Japan will continue to explore what it can do to best assist in this area.

The indispensable role of the United Nations in Afghanistan has been reaffirmed on a number of occasions by the Council itself, but also at various international forums. It was again borne out in the conduct of the recent elections. We fully recognize how difficult and treacherous the situation is for United Nations personnel to accomplish their given mandates. The leadership of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Kai Eide, and the courageous efforts of his staff are highly commendable.

Japan reiterates its support for the strengthening of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan in the months to come and looks forward to examining a detailed proposal.

Mr. Le Luong Minh (Viet Nam): I thank you, Madam President, for convening this meeting, and I thank Mr. Kai Eide, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), whose work we commend and continue to support, for his updated briefing on the situation in Afghanistan.

I welcome Foreign Minister Rangin Dâdfar Spantâ of Afghanistan and thank him for his statement. I also recognize the presence of His Excellency Mr. Ahmet Davutoğlu, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Turkey.

As Norma Chan, Chief of the Security Council Secretariat Branch, is retiring tomorrow, I would like to extend to her our sincere congratulations and gratitude for the great service she has accomplished over many decades. As upcoming President of the Council, I very much regret that she cannot stay for another month. I wish Norma all the best in her new undertaking and new life.

We welcome the positive developments in Afghanistan over the past three months, especially the holding of the presidential and provincial council elections on 20 August 2009, which were the first elections run by the Independent Election Commission. Despite many irregularities reported, we could see from the elections the strong aspiration of the Afghan people for peace and stability.

We respect the choice of the Afghan people of their leadership and hope that the election results will lay a sound foundation for political stability in the country. In the short term, we hope valuable lessons learned will be useful in planning Afghanistan's 2010 parliamentary elections. In the face of the present delicate situation, we urge all parties concerned to constructively cooperate with a view to establishing a new, strong Afghan Government that is capable of moving the country forward.

From another perspective, those elections revealed a more comprehensive picture of the current situation in Afghanistan, in which major challenges such as insecurity, weak institutions and insufficient human and financial resources are prominent features.

A steadily increasing number of attacks and other security incidents since the beginning of this year, particularly during the weeks prior to the elections, reconfirm the shared assessment that insecurity remains the biggest challenge to Afghanistan. The deteriorating security situation in many parts of the country has significantly hampered not only attempts to hold the elections peacefully with broad participation of eligible voters, but also efforts to consolidate institution-building and governance and to improve the safety and living conditions of the people.

Most of the current infrastructure-building projects are confined to the centre, unable to reach remote localities where poor people are in urgent need of assistance. The alleged electoral irregularities indicate that there should be more focus on training Afghans to develop capacities of participating in and contributing to the country's political process.

Against that background, we welcome the inclusion of benchmarks and indicators of progress in the Secretary-General's report. They will provide a good basis for determining the priorities in the next stage, for measuring progress and for making the adjustments necessary to achieve the goals set in all areas, ranging from institution-building, security improvement and socio-economic development to human rights promotion and the fight against drugs. We would like to emphasize our view that protection of civilians and the improvement of living conditions of the Afghan people must be accorded top priority.

At this critical stage in Afghanistan's peace process, the long-term commitment of international donors is of still greater significance. We support the early convening of an international conference to reassess the assistance needs of Afghanistan in this post-election period. However, the Afghan Administration and people, as the owners of the county's peace process, must be able to play a decisive role in this process. The Government of Afghanistan must be enabled to assume all the responsibilities that belong to a sovereign State. The support and assistance of the international community, including UNAMA, should therefore be geared toward the achievement of this objective.

Mr. Vilović (Croatia): I would also like to begin by thanking the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Kai Eide, for his comprehensive briefing and for presenting the Secretary-General's report on the situation in Afghanistan. We thank Mr. Eide for the exemplary leadership he has provided under extremely harsh circumstances. At the same time, we extend our thanks to the staff of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) for their dedication and courage.

We also wish like to welcome the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan, Mr. Spantâ, to this table and thank him for his valuable contribution today.

Croatia welcomes the holding last month of the first presidential and provincial council elections run entirely by the Afghan Government, with the support of UNDP/ELECT. In the same breath, we would like to praise the people of Afghanistan for their participation in determining the future course of their country

despite the many serious difficulties they face and the self-evident risks involved.

As we have been informed, there have been grave allegations that the recent elections were marred by serious irregularities and fraud. It is thanks to existing electoral safeguards — including national and international observers, as well as a large number of candidate agents — that much of the fraud that did occur was discovered and referred to the relevant institutions. We hope that the process currently underway within the Electoral Complaints Commission will soon be completed and enable the Independent Election Commission to certify the election results.

Croatia deplores not only the loss of life and the barbaric destruction that occurred during preparations for the elections as well as on election day itself, but also a new height in the numbers of those maimed and killed as a result of the ever-increasing violence in the country. We strongly condemn the deliberate targeting of civilians and the reliance on asymmetric tactics in total disregard of human life and basic human values.

Croatia welcomes the new approach adopted by the new Commander of the International Security Assistance Force, with the protection of civilians as its centre and the further Afghanization of security operations. We note with satisfaction that there is further progress in coordinating key Afghan security institutions, including the acceleration of recruitment and training of the Afghan National Army.

It is important to stress that, although we see the military effort as an important and integral part of the overall solution in Afghanistan, we agree with the overall assessment that military means alone will not bring final success in the country. Carefully planned and attentively implemented national reconciliation programmes, carried out under well-known conditions, should, in our opinion, greatly contribute to this aim.

The new Government to be formed on the basis of generally accepted electoral results is expected to reaffirm its relationship with the international community and its own people. We share the assessment of the Secretary-General that the level of trust that the future Afghan Government can build with its people will impact the level of support that the Governments of donor and troop-contributing countries receive from their constituencies for continuing support to the efforts of the Afghan Government.

It is important that the new Government agenda address the main concerns of the Afghan population, especially security, the rule of law, the fight against corruption and the culture of impunity, as well as capacity-building. Similarly, in the economic sector the Government must develop a clear set of priorities with particular emphasis on Afghanistan's main potentials: agriculture, mineral resources and human development.

It is encouraging to learn that the process of priority-setting and donor alignments within the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board has significantly improved. Furthermore, Croatia is encouraged by reports of enhanced donor coordination and the increased readiness of donors to adjust resources in order to support well-formulated high-impact projects and policies that can bring considerable improvements, not only in post-combat areas but also in stable areas open to insurgents. Keeping in mind the importance and magnitude of the task assigned to UNAMA, Croatia strongly supports the further strengthening of the Mission and calls for additional resources.

Finally, Croatia finds the development benchmarks drawn from the UNAMA mandate a useful tool which the Council can use to follow the progress towards the objectives it set for Afghanistan. Croatia hopes they will further contribute to fulfilment of UNAMA's tasks and responsibilities.

Let me conclude by paying tribute to Norma Chan for her tireless work, to thank her for all of the assistance we received throughout the years and to wish her all the best in her future.

Mr. Mayr-Harting (Austria): I would also like to begin by thanking Ms. Norma Chan for the support we have received and that numerous Austrian Permanent Representatives, Austrian colleagues, and Austrian colleagues in the Secretariat have received from her during the years. I can only echo what my colleague from Viet Nam has said — that we are particularly sad to see her leave just one month before her support would have been most dearly needed. Let me also place on record that we particularly enjoyed and were happy to have her in Vienna during the three years that we were privileged to have her there.

On the subject of today, I would like to welcome the presence and the statement of the Foreign Minister of Afghanistan. I would also like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Kai Eide, for his briefing, his commitment and the work he is

doing there under very difficult circumstances in a very impressive fashion.

Austria shares the view that in spite of the many shortcomings of the elections held in August, it was a great achievement that those first entirely Afghan-led elections took place at all. The elections were preceded by a real campaign focusing on political agendas and allowing genuine competition among the candidates. The fact that millions of Afghans chose to vote in spite of the intimidation by insurgents is impressive and encouraging.

However, the fact that the voting process was marred by serious electoral fraud is of concern. All incidents must be addressed in order to ensure the credibility of the electoral process. Austria thus fully supports the work of the Electoral Complaints Commission.

Once the electoral process has been completed, it will be important for the new President to be certified promptly in order to permit the early formation of an effective and inclusive Government that can tackle the many challenges that lie ahead. We fully share the Secretary-General's view that the future Afghan Government will need to build a new relationship of trust with its people. Good governance, the rule of law and respect for human rights should form the general basis of the work of the new Government. Improvement in these areas, including the fight against corruption and drug trafficking, will be decisive.

The lessons learned from the election process should guide the preparations for the parliamentary elections to be held in 2010. Findings of the experts from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) will certainly be useful in this context. The same goes for the recommendations of the European Union election observation mission, which played a useful role in the observation of the August elections.

I would also like to underline the important overall contribution of the European Union in the framework of efforts in Afghanistan, in particular through assistance in the field of security sector reform, development and the election process. I am sure that the Member State holding the presidency of the European Union will be happy to present the efforts and the position of the Union in greater detail when the Security Council next debates the situation in Afghanistan.

Undoubtedly, one of the biggest challenges now is improving the security situation for the people of Afghanistan. Incidents involving improvised explosive devices and complex attacks by insurgents on civilians and on humanitarian personnel are extremely worrying. We have to convey the clear message that those responsible for intimidation or violence directed against humanitarian workers will be held to account. Minimizing the alarming toll in civilian casualties must be our number-one objective. We welcome the new approach of the International Security Assistance Force that gives the protection of the Afghan population the highest priority and includes closer operational partnership with the Afghan national security forces.

We are also aware of the important efforts made by the current Government of Afghanistan to improve the human rights situation. There are major problems to be tackled, as documented in the recent joint report by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) on violence against women. In this context we wish to welcome and acknowledge the adoption in July of the new law on the elimination of violence against women. We hope that this law will take precedence over the Shia Personal Status law, which from our point of view does not comply with international human rights standards and the international commitments of Afghanistan.

On the issue of narcotics, the Special Representative has already referred to the positive developments achieved during the past year. We are happy to see that the trilateral initiative of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime "Rainbow strategy" has entered into the operational phase.

Austria also welcomes the ongoing engagement of the OSCE with Afghanistan and would be happy to see UNAMA continue to engage and cooperate with the OSCE field missions in the region wherever possible.

Looking to the future, we welcome the proposal to hold an international conference on Afghanistan to renew the Afghanistan Compact. This process must lead to what one might call a real civilian surge based on the principles of capacity-building and increased responsibility and ownership on the part of the Afghan Government.

In conclusion, let me acknowledge the important work that UNAMA and other United Nations bodies are doing in Afghanistan. Austria fully supports the planned expansion and strengthening of UNAMA. We would also value and welcome the benchmarks and indicators of progress annexed to the Secretary-General's report. They provide the Security Council with a useful tool for measuring progress. We welcome in particular the inclusion of specific indicators with regard to the protection of civilians and are certainly happy that the Secretary-General looks to refining these benchmarks further in consultation with the Afghan Government and the international community.

Mr. Tiendrébéogo (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): Burkina Faso wishes to echo the words of the President and the other Security Council members in conveying our gratitude to Ms. Norma Chan. Our delegation has benefited from her availability and professionalism, and together we are profoundly grateful to her. We wish her a peaceful retirement — in any case, more peaceful than life in the Council — and great success in her life after the Council.

I thank Mr. Kai Eide, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), for his briefing. I welcome the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan and thank him for his important contribution.

Burkina Faso welcomes the holding of presidential and provincial elections in August, which enabled the Afghan people to take control of their own destiny. The organization of the elections was itself a real challenge, and the difficulties encountered during the electoral process once again show the necessity and urgency of true national reconciliation, an indispensable prerequisite for all development efforts. It is our hope that the audit and recount process of electoral results will take place rapidly and in a credible manner in order to ensure that the final results are accepted by all.

The new Government faces many arduous tasks and numerous and difficult challenges. Once more, we call upon the international community to continue and enhance its support for Afghanistan, in particular in the priority areas identified as benchmarks in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2009/475).

We commend UNAMA for its work alongside the Afghan people. Its efforts to ensure greater aid effectiveness and improve national reconciliation at the local level and its support in the political and, especially, human rights spheres deserve our recognition. We welcome the 19 July signing of the law on the elimination of violence against women and the strengthening of Afghan legal and crime-prevention capacity. Since these are essential components of international efforts on the ground, we firmly encourage the Mission to do everything in its power to attain the objectives of resolution 1868 (2009). To enable it do fulfil its mandate effectively, it is crucial that it be granted adequate resources.

Turning to economic and social development, there has been progress in follow-up in the area of financing for development. But the reduced funding for the Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund and the tendency to focus on donors' preferences continue to increase the Government's dependency on the international community. We call upon donor States to honour their pledges and to work with the Government to forge a common strategy for sustainable development owned by the Afghan people.

We hope that present trends will continue with regard to reductions in opium poppy cultivation and drug production and their replacement by legitimate crops, as well as with regard to strengthening the fight against corruption. Here, we welcome the support provided by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the national and international security forces, in coordination with neighbouring countries.

Clearly, the prerequisites for progress in Afghanistan remain the strengthening of State institutions, the extension of State authority throughout the national territory and, above all, the political will of all actors to achieve these things. In that regard we share the view of the Secretary-General on the need for infrastructure to make it possible for public institutions to function, to enhance public administration capacity, the establishment of a judicial system that is credible and accessible to all citizens, the enhancement of the public revenue collection system and the promotion of youth employment on the basis of merit.

Yet none of those goals will be met without security. That is why we support an increase in the number of well trained and fully operational police and military personnel. In that regard, we take note of the quality of the new tactical approach employed by the International Security Assistance Force, based on

protection of populations and improvement in the conditions under which operations take place, along with development of the Afghan forces to whom responsibility for security will gradually be transferred.

This, to be sure, is a difficult long-term endeavour, but it is the path we must follow if we want peace and prosperity in Afghanistan.

In conclusion, we fully support the proposal that an international conference on Afghanistan be convened. We hope that this opportunity will give rise to specific initiatives for the sake of peace and social and economic development in that country.

Mr. Parham (United Kingdom): Let me first express the thanks of the United Kingdom delegation to Norma Chan for her extraordinary service to the United Nations and to the Security Council over so many years, as well as for her kindness, efficiency and wise advice. Her shrewd and sometimes quite wicked sense of humour has enhanced our lives. We are immensely grateful and we wish her all the best.

On the matter at hand, let me begin by thanking the Secretary-General for his latest report on the situation in Afghanistan (S/2009/475) and Special Representative Eide for his briefing today. I also welcome Foreign Minister Spantâ and thank him for his contribution to our consideration of this item.

It is important that we continue to have regular and frank discussions on the situation in Afghanistan. These reports and these briefings are a key element of the Security Council's engagement with the work of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA).

When the Council met in June (see S/PV.6154) to discuss the last UNAMA report (S/2009/323), many if not all of us underlined the significance for Afghanistan of the August presidential election and the need for the United Nations to work with the Afghan authorities to ensure that they were credible, inclusive and secure. The fact that those elections went ahead, in what were very challenging circumstances, is an achievement in itself. Holding the first Afghan-led electoral process for 30 years was an important step along the road to creating a stable, secure and self-sustaining Afghanistan.

The Secretary-General's report sets out some of the significant achievements, including the number of polling stations opened and the substantive tenor of the political debate. It also notes the reports of electoral fraud and irregularities. The only appropriate response to those reports is to allow the Afghan Independent Election Commission and the Electoral Complaints Commission to complete the electoral audit currently under way. We must be patient and allow that process to run its course. Their work is essential to ensure that the outcome of the election is credible and reflects the will of the Afghan people. They have our full support.

As the Secretary-General's report notes, regardless of who wins the election, the crucial next step is the formation of a credible and effective Government that will deliver to the people of Afghanistan on the issues that matter: security, governance, justice, development and a workable programme for reintegration. Building the legitimate economy and pursuing the fight against corruption will also be key challenges for the new Government. We, alongside the rest of the international community, stand ready to support that Government in pursuing these priorities, focusing wherever possible on building Afghan capacity.

To that end, we hope there will be agreement to the proposal to convene a post-election conference in Kabul, co-chaired by the United Nations and the next Afghan Government, the aim of which should be to cement the international community's coordinated support for a new government programme.

The United Nations, and more specifically UNAMA, will be at the heart of the international support to the new Government. Their ability to lead and coordinate the overall international effort is crucial to success in Afghanistan. So, we welcome the publication of UNAMA's strategic benchmarks and indicators of progress, which will be an important tool for measuring progress. We hope that those benchmarks will continue to evolve. As we look to further enhance UNAMA's ability to deliver on its mandate, it will be important to measure accurately the progress of the Mission and its role in delivering our shared objective, as well as that of the broader international effort.

We continue to support UNAMA's plans to establish a more extensive presence across the country and look forward to hearing more detail on UNAMA's expansion plans, their resource implications and the setting of priorities.

Despite the many challenges Afghanistan faces, it is heartening to be able to note the continuing positive trends in counter-narcotics, as Special Representative Eide himself noted earlier. Following the 19 per cent decrease in opium cultivation in 2008, it looks set to fall by a further 22 per cent this year. In Helmand, close work with the Afghan authorities has resulted in a decrease in cultivation by one third, and the operations conducted this year under the trilateral initiative of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime provide grounds for cautious optimism at the regional level as well.

Let me touch briefly on the issue of civilian casualties. The position of the United Kingdom remains as set out in previous discussions. We deeply regret — deeply regret — any civilian casualty. Each and every innocent life lost is a tragedy. As General McChrystal has made clear, protecting the Afghan population is at the core of our international mission, in stark contrast to the Taliban and their fellow insurgents, who, as the Secretary-General's report makes clear, continue to account for the vast majority of civilian deaths.

I would like to conclude by taking the opportunity to express our gratitude and thanks for the efforts of Special Representative Eide and all UNAMA staff, who continue to do vitally important work, often in incredibly difficult circumstances. The 18 August attack in Kabul that killed two UNAMA staff members and wounded a third is a tragic reminder of the very real dangers they face in carrying out their work. They will continue to have the United Kingdom's full support.

Mr. Dabbashi (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I wish to join you, Madam President, and the other colleagues who spoke before me in expressing my thanks and appreciation to Ms. Norma Chan, who was always an indispensable reference-point for my delegation. I truly appreciate her efforts, and in particular her unflagging assistance, especially on Libya's first day as a member of the Security Council, when we assumed the presidency. Certainly, we will miss Norma in the Council. We regret her departure, but wish her good health, happiness and success — here or elsewhere.

I would like to thank the Secretary-General for the comprehensive and detailed report (S/2009/475) before us, and Mr. Kai Eide for his briefing to the Security Council. I welcome His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan to the Council, and I thank him for joining us.

I would like to commend the United Nations Mission of Assistance in Afghanistan for its outstanding efforts to rebuild the country despite the many security challenges and the various problems that the Mission has faced in obtaining the funding it needs.

Once again, we are considering the situation in Afghanistan, which has not changed greatly from when NATO forces drove the Taliban from power. Unfortunately, the Afghan people continue to experience a lack of security and the unjustified killing of civilians. Most regrettably, that killing is by both sides — by the international forces on the one hand, and by the Taliban on the other. Both have offered justifications. The international forces either claim that there were mistakes or say that the intended targets were Taliban elements. For their part, the Taliban say that they are fighting the foreign forces and their collaborators. However, the innocent Afghan people are always the victims.

Once again, the Secretary-General's report reaffirms the deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan and the increasing number of civilian casualties owing to attacks by armed groups and air strikes by the international forces. We should like to reiterate our deep regret over the killing of civilians, in particular by international forces, who, we believe, can clearly avoid this. However, it continues unabated despite appeals both from within and from outside Afghanistan.

We are also greatly concerned to read in paragraph 5 of the report of the Secretary-General that "Efforts undertaken over the past several years to increase the number of national and international security forces have failed to stem the insurgency". War planners in Afghanistan have attempted to achieve military victory regardless of the number of civilian casualties, and therefore the number of foreign forces in Afghanistan has increased in the past few months. However, the result has been only an increasing number of both civilian and military casualties.

At the beginning of this meeting, Mr. Eide stated that the present security situation is the worst since 2002. Mr. Eide added that many Afghans have joined the insurgency owing to a sense of political and social marginalization. I would add another reason: the

occasional atrocities committed by foreign forces against Afghan civilians.

That leads us to something that my delegation has constantly stressed in the Security Council: that the solution is not related to the number of forces or to the amount of equipment provided to them. On the contrary, it requires a comprehensive review of the situation, ranging from national reconciliation to sustainable development. We agree with paragraph 8 of the Secretary-General's report, which mentions the calls of some political forces in the country for a ceasefire with the Taliban as a first step towards stability in the country.

The international community's ultimate objective is to help the Afghan people to build a democratic, stable and prosperous State in Afghanistan. The war against the Taliban and others is not an objective in itself, especially since the use of force alone will definitely not achieve stability or security. Those can only be achieved through a dialogue that seeks national reconciliation among all sectors of the Afghan people and all those who are ready to renounce violence and to accept dialogue, and by fighting corruption, drug trafficking and other ills.

We therefore believe that the international community must adopt programmes that enable Afghanistan to fully shoulder its responsibilities as a sovereign country capable of ensuring security and a dignified life for each and every one of its citizens and that create the conditions for the withdrawal of foreign forces as soon as possible. We believe that to be a fundamental condition for national reconciliation, without which security and stability will not prevail.

Some previous reports of the Secretary-General have mentioned the conditions of those held in various detention centres in Afghanistan. The report before us today states in paragraph 52 that the Special Representative visited several detention centres, including the detention facility at Bagram, run by the international forces, but makes no assessment of the conditions in those detention centres or of respect for international humanitarian law and human rights there. I would ask Mr. Eide to tell us, however briefly, about the conditions in those detention centres.

Mr. Heller (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): We welcome the presence among us of Mr. Rangin Dâdfar Spantâ, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan, to whom we have listened with great attention, especially in connection with the four categories of challenges that his country currently faces. We also welcome the presence of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Turkey. We thank Mr. Kai Eide, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his presentation of the Secretary-General's report (S/2009/475) and for his commendable efforts in the face of the challenges his Office faces in contributing to Afghanistan's development. We also appreciate the inclusion in the report of indicators of progress, which we should duly follow up.

A little more than a month since the holding of elections for the presidency and provincial councils in Afghanistan, despite the importance of the democratic process of elections for the first time in many years in that country, my delegation is concerned about the lack of clarity with regard to the outcome of the process, which is made even worse by the numerous complaints of electoral irregularities and fraud. We are also concerned about the existence of acts of intimidation and violence, which significantly hampered the participation of citizens, including women.

We trust that the Electoral Complaints Commission will carefully investigate the numerous allegations that have been made, so as to ensure that the final results to be issued by the Independent Election Commission are respected by all parties involved, avert any recurrence of violence and, above all, contribute to helping Afghanistan and its institutions emerge strengthened from the process to focus on social issues and the stability and security of the entire population throughout the country, thereby establishing, as has been suggested by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General himself, a new contract between the Government and the people that makes it possible for Afghanistan to take on its responsibilities as a sovereign State. In that regard, we support all the efforts made by the Special Representative to ensure that the Afghan Government can continue to count on international support, in particular from the countries of the region, which is necessary to work in an inclusive process that will lead to peace. Out of the elections should emerge a strengthened Afghanistan and reconciliation, rather than new reasons for division, in that long-suffering country.

With regard to security, Mexico regrets the current increase in the number of violent incidents as compared with previous years. Without a doubt, the

statistics illustrate that insecurity continues to be the main factor affecting progress in Afghanistan. Just today, there were new incidents of violence that claimed numerous civilian victims in Kandahar. We condemn those events. We believe that the actions of international forces should include parallel efforts to promote development, respect for human rights and the strengthening of the rule of law, thereby combating the root causes of violence. In that connection, we support the focus that the International Security Assistance Force has begun to adopt, by which the protection of the Afghan civilian population should have the highest priority.

Moreover, we acknowledge the achievements that have been made to reduce the cultivation of opium poppies, which is a strategic issue in ensuring the country's security. We also acknowledge the progress that has been made by Afghanistan in the process of dialogue and bilateral cooperation with Pakistan and Iran. That is a step forward in addressing common challenges to regional stability such as terrorism, illicit drug trafficking and organized crime. We hope that that process will lead to long-term strategic planning that includes concrete measures that contribute to speeding up and expanding the progress that has been made.

Mexico welcomes President Karzai's signing of the law on the eradication of violence against women, which criminalizes sexual violence, including rape and forced marriage, including underage marriage. We support all the Government's efforts to ensure the implementation of that law throughout the country. We also acknowledge the work done by the United Nations alongside institutions of the justice system with a view to comply with international human rights norms relative to detention and due process.

Special attention should be given to the fight against corruption and impunity. We urge the Government of Afghanistan to provide the necessary impetus to address that challenge and achieve results, which would bolster its authority and legitimacy, increase confidence on the part of the population and strengthen the Government's hand in counter-insurgency efforts.

In conclusion, Mexico would like to reiterate its condemnation of attacks against humanitarian personnel. We would also like to underscore our concern about the serious threat posed to civilians by mines and other explosives and remnants of war. We commend the efforts on the ground by the Government of Afghanistan and the international community to make progress in unearthing and destroying those devices.

Lastly, I too would like to express our gratitude and appreciation to Ms. Norma Chan. We wish her every success in the future.

Mr. Araud (France) (*spoke in French*): Allow me, first of all, to begin by thanking Ms. Norma Chan for her contribution to the work of the Security Council. I would like to convey to her my best wishes for happiness in the new life before her.

Allow me also to acknowledge the presence among us of Mr. Rangin Dâdfar Spantâ, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan.

With regard to the current tense post-electoral environment in Afghanistan, I would first like to underscore the outstanding role and work of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), which reflects the central part it plays in the efforts undertaken by the international community. I would like in particular to commend the work of Special Representative Kai Eide, who has maintained strict and watchful impartiality in making an irreplaceable contribution to the credibility of the electoral process. I should therefore like to reiterate our full confidence in the Special Representative, both in his role as the international community's spokesman to the Afghan people and in his efforts to ensure the mobilization and coordination of the international community on an issue where much remains to be done despite the progress made in the past year. He will need the unwavering support of the international community to overcome those challenges, and he can of course count on France's support in that regard.

As the Council is aware, France is very involved in Afghanistan. On the military level, we have deployed more than 3,000 troops in dangerous combat zones. They have paid a heavy price. With respect to police personnel, we are currently deploying members of the gendarmerie as part of the European gendarme force. Turning to civilian assistance, my country has made very significant efforts in recent years. Alongside its partners, France will continue its commitment for as long as is necessary to bring about an Afghan State that is able to fully take its future in its own hands.

Afghan voters went to polling stations on 20 August 2009 to elect their President and provincial council members. As the Special Representative of the Secretary-General has underscored, certain irregularities have been pointed out. The Independent Election Commission and the Electoral Complaints Commission have conducted an audit on this subject. They must be able to work in transparency and tranquillity with the support and confidence of all parties.

As we await final results, we have only one demand: that procedures be complied with so that, ultimately, the choice of the Afghans is respected. It is essential that dialogue and national consensus continue, including beyond the elections. Whatever the final result may be, the establishment of a Government which can express that national consensus is desirable.

The elections were a time when the Afghan people not only could see what has been accomplished, but also turn towards the future and express their hopes and expectations as a new period is beginning in the history of Afghanistan. For the international community also, it is a time to take stock of our commitment and evaluate the challenges still before us, as well as the best way to meet them.

That is why France, together with Germany and the United Kingdom, has taken the initiative to propose to the United Nations that a new international conference on Afghanistan be convened after a new Afghan Government has been put in place. The goal of such a conference would be based on the comprehensive strategy, defined in 2008 in Bucharest and at the Paris conference, to establish the framework for relations between Afghanistan and the international community during this new phase, which should see Afghans taking full control over their national destiny.

These gradually increasing responsibilities will require from the future Afghan authorities more resolute, virtuous and effective action than in the past. Priority reforms must be urgently undertaken on political and domestic matters insufficiently addressed to date: improving governance, in particular local governance; building Afghan security and civilian capacities; stepping up the fight against corruption; and re-launching the national reconciliation process and speeding up the progressive reintegration of ex-combatants into society.

We welcome the Secretary-General's positive response to our proposal. The modalities for the conference will be discussed with interested parties, beginning, of course, with the next Afghan Government. In any case, we believe it essential that the meeting be held as soon as possible so that the international community can support the renewed compact concluded between the Afghan people and their Government.

Mr. Liu Zhenmin (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I should like to thank Mr. Eide, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan, for his briefing. We also welcome the presence of Mr. Spantá, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan and thank him for his statement.

We are closely following the elections in Afghanistan, which will have a significant impact on the country's peace process. We hope that the people of Afghanistan will use them to elect leaders who will represent the will of the people, promote social unity and stability and advance the comprehensive enhancement of the Government's governing capacity.

Maintaining stability is the focus of efforts in Afghanistan. We hope that the Afghan national security forces, together with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan and the International Security Assistance Force, will do everything in their power to maintain stability in Afghanistan and guarantee the safety of the lives and property of the Afghan people. We also hope that the Afghan Government, National Army and National Police, with the assistance of the international community, will continue to build their capacities and independently assume the task of maintaining national security and social stability at an early date.

We note that, with vigorous support from the international community, Afghanistan has made some progress in the areas of the peace process and domestic reconstruction. In particular, the area under opium cultivation has been greatly reduced. That is a significant achievement and a contribution to the international counter-narcotics effort. The international community should continue to increase its investment in Afghanistan's economic reconstruction and assist the country in the areas of agriculture, education and health; support its effort to improve infrastructure; promote the positive development of Afghan society;

and significantly reduce the number of destabilizing factors in Afghan society.

We support the Organization's continued leading and coordinating role in assisting Afghanistan in its reconstruction. As a friendly neighbour, China will, within its capabilities, continue to provide Afghanistan with assistance, actively participate in its reconstruction and work tirelessly to help it achieve lasting peace and stability.

Finally, I should like to take this opportunity to thank Ms. Norma Chan for her more than 30 years of work at the United Nations and for her contribution to international peace. I wish her every success in her retirement.

Mr. Guillermet (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): Like other delegations, I should like to thank Mr. Eide for introducing the report of the Secretary-General (S/2009/475) and to take this opportunity to congratulate him and the entire staff of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) on the excellent work accomplished on the ground. I also thank Mr. Spantâ, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan, for his statement today and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Turkey for his participation in this important debate.

Costa Rica recognizes the great challenges involved in the electoral process and the merits of holding elections in Afghanistan. Undoubtedly, the very fact that they were held was a genuine success. That said, the prolonged wait for definitive results jeopardizes the progress that has been made. That is why we urge the swift and transparent conclusion of the recount process in accordance with the relevant legal procedures.

The number of complaints submitted to the Electoral Complaints Commission is alarming and gives rise to concern that the electoral process has not been seen as fair and lacks legitimacy. That will have adverse consequences for the consolidation of democracy, security and peace for the Afghan people.

The international community must remain committed to fair and transparent electoral processes as a way to express unequivocal support for the Afghan people in electing their authorities and determining their own destiny. We hope that the lessons learned from this process will serve to improve the planning and holding of the 2010 parliamentary elections. This experience should be utilized to ensure greater legitimacy in future elections and to strengthen nascent democratic institutions. The valuable lessons that can be learned from this experience will undoubtedly contribute to the future sustainability of the Afghan State.

In the area of human rights, our country deplores the increase in the number of threats and attacks against women participating in public life, as well as the continuing sexual abuse to which women and children are very often subjected. In that context, we recognize the signing of the law on the elimination of violence against women as significant progress towards gender equality and a promising step in the protection of women and children against violence.

The recent adoption of the Shia Personal Status law, which we believe discriminates against a minority, is grounds for concern, as it legalizes practices that run counter to women's rights established under the Constitution and international treaties to which Afghanistan is party, as indicated in paragraph 51 of the Secretary-General's report. It is therefore necessary to call on the authorities to respect the Constitution and to honour their international obligations with regard to the protection of women.

During the process of adopting resolution 1868 (2009) extending the mandate of UNAMA, Costa Rica spoke in favour of including explicit provisions to ensure that all parties comply with the provisions of international humanitarian and human rights law in order to safeguard the well-being of the civilian population. It is thus crucial that measures be implemented to protect civilians.

We agree that there is a need to adopt a broad approach recognizing that the way to guarantee stability in Afghanistan is not exclusively military. In that regard, we welcome the new approach adopted by the military forces on the ground, which will henceforth focus their attention on protecting the civilian population, as opposed to attacking insurgents, according to the report before us today.

While there has been a shift in the military approach to the situation, we are concerned by the high rate of civilian casualties. As indicated in paragraph 54 of the Secretary-General's report, a significant percentage of those casualties were caused by pro-Government forces. We also regret the ongoing attacks on humanitarian personnel, who have been

subject to acts of intimidation, burglary, abduction and assassination, which impede access to humanitarian assistance to those who most need it. We call on the new Government of Afghanistan to make security priorities on its agenda, and to take firm steps in favour of long-term stability and improved conditions for the sustainable development of the country.

My country is grateful for the work undertaken by all the personnel of UNAMA, and recognizes their valiant efforts to promote peace and stability in Afghanistan. We wish in particular to acknowledge UNAMA's recent efforts during the presidential and Provincial Council elections. Costa Rica reaffirms its support for the work of UNAMA and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

Finally, I, too, wish to thank Norma Chan for her commitment and professionalism throughout her long career at the United Nations. On behalf of the delegation of Costa Rica, I wish her a long life and great happiness in her retirement.

Mr. Rugunda (Uganda): I thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan, Mr. Kai Eide, for his briefing. We welcome the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan, Mr. Rangin Dâdfar Spantâ, and thank him for his statement.

We commend the central role that the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) continues to play in coordinating international and regional action, assistance and support for Afghanistan. We welcome the presidential and provincial elections that were held on 20 August. In spite of the irregularities in the electoral process, the elections constitute a positive step in the democratization process in Afghanistan.

We welcome the efforts of the Electoral Complaints Commission to address complaints, which is necessary to avoid disillusionment and apprehension in the Afghan public. We call on all parties and the Afghan people to refrain from unlawful acts and to remain calm while awaiting the outcome of the investigations.

Uganda is concerned about the increased incidence of violence and insurgency by the Taliban and other anti-Government elements. We condemn those attacks, which are aimed at disrupting peace and security in the country. The primary responsibility for ensuring peace and stability in Afghanistan lies with the Government and people of that country. However, long-term support and commitment from the United Nations, regional and subregional actors and the wider international community are essential to building up the Afghan security forces and enabling them to assume their role effectively. Furthermore, closer regional cooperation will provide enhanced opportunities to deal with common challenges that cut across national borders, and will also generate momentum for peace, stability and prosperity in Afghanistan.

Much remains to be done in addressing the urgent issues related to the reconstruction of the economy of the country. The efforts of the Government require additional support from the international community if the country is to recover from the devastation of war. Such critical areas as health care, education, energy and infrastructure need to be addressed in order to radically change the situation on the ground and give greater hope and promise to the population. In doing so, the Afghan Government should take the primary responsibility for re-establishing the key institutions of governance and economic recovery, with the support of the international partners. That is key to sustainable national development.

We therefore welcome the increased leadership and ownership of the development process shown by the Afghan Government. The success of those development efforts will depend significantly on the availability of adequate and predictable resources. We therefore call on the international community to enhance its support for the Afghan Government in the revitalization of the economy and national institution-building. In that regard, we also call on Member States to provide UNAMA with additional resources and specialized personnel to enable it to fulfil its mandate. We welcome the benchmarks and indicators in the Secretary-General's report (S/2009/475), which we expect to facilitate more effective monitoring by the Council of progress made in the implementation of UNAMA's mandate and priorities.

In conclusion, Uganda commends the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the staff of UNAMA for their important contribution to promoting peace and stability in Afghanistan.

I would also like to join you, Madam, and other members of the Council in expressing our deep appreciation and gratitude to Norma Chan for her

exemplary service to the Council. She has been an indispensable and reliable reference point for us in the Council, and especially for new members. We wish her the best in her new programmes and her retirement.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Clearly, we share all the feelings so eloquently expressed to Ms. Norma Chan by colleagues who spoke earlier. We wish her every success in her future endeavours.

We thank Mr. Kai Eide for his comprehensive and candid analysis of the situation in Afghanistan, as well as for his introduction of the Secretary-General's periodic report (S/2009/475). We welcome the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan, Mr. Spantâ, and listened very attentively to his statement.

The main event during the reporting period was the holding of presidential and local elections in Afghanistan. The preliminary results have been published, and we hope for the rapid conclusion of all necessary procedures related to the partial recount by the Electoral Complaints Commission. Based on those results, we expect the rapid formation of a new Afghan Government, which is especially critical in the light of the significant tasks facing the country.

The very fact that the elections were held, despite attempts by extremist forces to impede this expression of the popular will, confirms the Afghan people's determination to build a strong, independent and democratic State.

The main obstacle on the path to the reconstruction of the country remains the security situation. The Secretary-General's data on the number of incidents confirm that efforts by the Afghan authorities and the international military presence have not led to genuine improvements in this field. Indeed, the situation continues to deteriorate rapidly. The terrorist activity of the Taliban and Al-Qaida is growing. These activities remain the main destabilizing factor.

Against this backdrop, we are especially concerned by the continuing civilian deaths as a result of International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) operations. Work to prevent civilian casualties is being undertaken. However, thus far, it has not been effective enough.

We back the objective of national reconciliation in Afghanistan. We cannot forget, however, that the fight against the Taliban and Al-Qaida is not only domestic in nature, but also has regional and international dimensions. That is why the process of national reconciliation should not run counter to relevant Security Council decisions, including implementation of the sanctions regime against the Taliban and Al-Qaida.

We are against the creation of special conditions for delisting of so-called reconciled members of the Taliban. Who will guarantee that they will not return to their past activities? If the Afghan leadership deems it useful to forge contacts with former combatants, then such dialogue should take place only with those who have laid down their arms, who have recognized the Government and the Constitution of Afghanistan and who have rejected all links with Al-Qaida.

We are deeply concerned by the situation with respect to the production and trafficking of narcotics. Despite a reduction in the area under drug crops cultivation and a relative decrease in the volume of production of narcotic substances, it is premature to talk of success here.

Thousands of people are dying as a result of the narcotics trade. It is insufficient to apply only economic measures to fight this, although stimulating legitimate agricultural activity by the population should be continued. There is an undoubted need to bring new non-force methods to bear to eliminate drug crops and destroy drug trafficking infrastructure. ISAF possesses the necessary potential for this.

There is a need to move more actively to include drug traffickers in the Security Council sanctions list. Drug traffickers nurture terrorist and extremist structures. The large-scale production of raw materials for narcotics and narcotics themselves is one of the main channels of financing for the terrorist movement and, to a large extent, leads to the development of negative phenomena such as corruption and lawlessness.

We believe that the scale of the Afghan drugs threat requires that work be stepped up at various levels. We are referring here, inter alia, to the importance of pooling counter-narcotics efforts of the NATO-led ISAF in close cooperation with the Government of the country and with the actions of Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), with the objective of establishing an anti-narcotics security belt along Afghanistan's borders. In the field of

countering terrorism, drug trafficking and organized crime in general, there is a need to more actively harness the potential of regional institutions that have demonstrated their effectiveness in this field. I am referring here, first and foremost, to the CSTO, and to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

We take note of the initiative by a number of European States of organizing an international conference in Afghanistan to discuss future assistance for the country during the post-electoral period. The main thing here is that this proposal should enjoy the backing of the Afghans themselves. We have noted Mr. Spantâ's statement on this matter here today. Such an event should be held after a new Afghan Government has been formed and has started its work.

In Afghanistan, we all share a common interest, namely to provide security and to establish a democratic and independent State. We back ISAF and the coalition forces. To this end, we have concluded bilateral agreements on military transit with the Federal Republic of Germany, France and, most recently, with Spain. An agreement has been signed on the transit of non-military NATO shipments. There is an important agreement on military transit with the United States of America. We hope for the rapid launch of the implementation of the Plan of Action of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Member States and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, adopted at the special conference on Afghanistan held in Moscow. We invite all interested States and international organizations to promote the implementation of the Plan of Action.

The Russian Federation is genuinely interested in achieving a stable settlement in Afghanistan. We will work to resolve this issue in close cooperation with our Afghan and international partners.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the United States.

On behalf of the United States, let me first thank Special Representative Kai Eide for his briefing today and for his excellent leadership of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) during a critical time. I also wish to thank Foreign Minister Spantâ of Afghanistan for his presence here today and to extend, through him, our appreciation and respect for the people of Afghanistan.

The United States continues to strongly support the efforts of UNAMA to achieve the goals of resolution 1868 (2009) as it works in concert with the Government of Afghanistan and the international community. UNAMA's work remains unfinished, but important strides have been made in the past three months.

The ongoing Afghan electoral process has not been easy, but we applaud the courage of Afghan voters and the dedication of officials who have been polling, tallying and adjudicating results. The United States will continue to encourage all parties to respect the Afghan institutions that conducted these elections.

While serious allegations of fraud have been made and are being investigated, Afghan citizens are seeking to resolve their concerns through the formal adjudication process, not through violence. The international community must support the Independent Election Commission and the Electoral Complaints Commission as they complete the difficult work of investigating and adjudicating incidents of fraud, in accordance with their responsibilities under Afghan law.

When the new Afghan Government is inaugurated, we must all quickly begin to work with it to help build up its capacity to meet the needs of the Afghan people.

Even as we approach the conclusion of this electoral season, however, we must also begin preparations for the 2010 parliamentary election. As the Secretary-General's report (S/2009/475) rightly notes, that work should start immediately.

UNAMA not only plays a critical role in Afghan elections; it is also indispensable as the coordinator of international assistance to Afghanistan. We will work closely with the Afghan Government and UNAMA to ensure that aid is properly aligned with Afghan priorities. We have already seen good progress with regard to agricultural programmes, where the United States plans to double assistance next year, in keeping with Afghan priorities. We also renew our commitment to work with UNAMA to reduce inefficiencies and ensure the appropriate and effective delivery of aid, and we urge other donors to join us.

The United States is also pleased to see that UNAMA is making progress in expanding its presence throughout Afghanistan. As the Secretary-General

notes, UNAMA is on track to reach a total of 17 provincial offices by the end of the year. This expanded provincial presence, called for in resolution 1868 (2009), will allow UNAMA to better monitor and coordinate aid programmes on the ground.

My Government urges the United Nations to approve the 2010 UNAMA budget increase, which will allow for further expansion of provincial offices, and we urge all of our fellow Member States to support UNAMA's outreach to the provinces by providing the necessary personnel and resources.

The United States commends UNAMA for its development of the benchmarks and indicators of progress outlined in the Secretary-General's report. Those benchmarks identify key areas where UNAMA, the international community and the Government of Afghanistan must focus their efforts. They helpfully identify metrics for concretely measuring success.

Let me turn to one final topic on which it is important to be clear. United States and International Security Assistance Force troops continue to make great efforts to avoid civilian casualties, as exemplified by General McChrystal's approach of having military operations prioritize the protection of the civilian population. This effort puts the Afghan people at the centre of the Mission. It also reflects the reality that the large majority of civilian deaths in Afghanistan are caused by ruthless acts of terrorism by insurgent groups that operate without regard for Afghan lives. The United States regrets all loss of innocent life during military operations and goes to great lengths to avoid civilian casualties. When they do occur, we provide humanitarian assistance to affected communities and conduct thorough joint investigations with the Afghan Government to determine the facts.

For all the progress Afghanistan has made, we must work together to do even more. The United States continues to believe that UNAMA is an essential element of our common efforts to support the Afghan people in their struggle to rebuild their country and defeat a determined foe. We will continue to support UNAMA's critical mission for the benefit of Afghanistan and for the peace and security of the region.

For the record, I wish to register my objection to some of the comments made by the representative of Libya, which I believe are unhelpful to today's discussion.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to Special Representative Eide for further comments.

Mr. Eide: Two or three issues were raised that I would like to comment on briefly.

The first relates to the comment made by the representative of the United Kingdom about the expansion of our offices. Just to give a quick response, I hope that over the next very few months we will be able to open four more offices in provinces where it is possible to operate. There are some provinces where we are asked to go unarmed but where most people do not want to go even armed, so that is not our priority. After that, further offices will really depend on Council members and many others giving us the resources we require.

The second issue relates to the comment by the Libyan Ambassador on civilian casualties. I really must say that the efforts being made now by General McChrystal are impressive, and I have also seen over the past few weeks how the level of civilian casualties has gone down. There has been one serious, unfortunate incident, but apart from that, the trend of the past few weeks is actually in the right direction. I commend General McChrystal on his efforts. His thinking on this is identical to mine.

With regard to detention centres, I have visited a number of them and intend to continue to do so. There are three reasons for that. One is to see the physical conditions under which detainees live; the second is to make sure that there is a possibility for detainees to inform and keep in touch with their families; and the third, of course, has to do with the possibility of recourse in the justice system. My general comment is that in Bagram the new facility being built is a tremendous step in the right direction. With regard to the Afghan facilities, I would say that they are in many ways miserable. The reason for that is clear — it is a lack of resources. They do not have them. If we, the donors, were able to provide more resources, much could be done in that respect.

We are suffering from a lack of resources not only for the actual facilities, but also for the justice system. That, of course, makes it even more difficult to handle things the way we should. I appeal to donors to provide more resources, and I know that those

responsible in the Afghan Government are in full agreement with me in this respect.

Finally, even though the French Ambassador did not ask me a question, I would like to comment on something he said. He said that he was grateful for the role that I had played with regard to the election process. I must say here that in the very complex period we have been going through — and this is really a very positive sign — there has been full harmony between my view and those of ambassadors around this table and of others in the diplomatic community in Kabul. That has certainly facilitated our dialogue with Afghan authorities.

The President: I am pleased to invite Ms. Norma Chan to take the floor.

Ms. Chan (Chief, Security Council Secretariat Branch): I would like to say a few words, but I promise not to speak for more than five minutes. After 36 years, and today at the United Nations, what more can I ask for? It is definitely time to retire. I am very touched and thrilled by the sentiments expressed to me this morning. I wish to thank all here who have given me this honour. I am very privileged to have had the opportunity and honour to work for them and for all those who came before them. From the bottom of my heart, I thank them all.

The President: Once again, I extend very best wishes from all of us to Ms. Chan.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.6195

Security Council

Sixty-fourth year

Provisional

6195th meeting

Wednesday, 30 September 2009, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Ms. Clinton	(United States of America)
Members:	Austria	Mr. Mayr-Harting
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Yoda
	China	Mr. Zhang Yesui
	Costa Rica	Mr. Urbina
	Croatia	Mr. Vilović
	France	Mr. Joyandet
	Japan	Mr. Takasu
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Shalgham
	Mexico	Mr. Heller
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Turkey	Mr. Apakan
	Uganda	Mr. Rugunda
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Sawers
	Viet Nam	Mr. Le Luong Minh

Agenda

Women and peace and security

Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to Security Council resolution 1820 (2008) (S/2009/362)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506.

09-53396 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Women and peace and security

Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to Security Council resolution 1820 (2008) (S/2009/362)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Albania, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Belgium, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Côte d'Ivoire, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Panama, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Romania, Rwanda, Senegal, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the United Republic of Tanzania, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, the representatives of the aforementioned countries took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: On behalf of the Council, I wish to acknowledge the presence in the Chamber of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Regional Cooperation of Burkina Faso, His Excellency Mr. Bedouma Alain Yoda, and the Minister of State for Cooperation and Francophonie of France, His Excellency Mr. Alain Joyandet.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2009/489, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Albania, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Panama, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Romania, Rwanda, Senegal, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United Republic of Tanzania and the United States of America.

I wish to draw the attention of members to document S/2009/362, containing the report of the Secretary-General pursuant to Security Council resolution 1820 (2008).

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Austria, Burkina Faso, China, Costa Rica, Croatia, France, Japan, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mexico, Russian Federation, Turkey, Uganda, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Viet Nam

The President: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1888 (2009).

I now have the privilege of making a statement in my capacity as Secretary of State of the United States of America.

I am very grateful to speak before the Security Council on this important issue. I want to thank everyone who has worked very hard to reach this point

on this resolution and, of course, to have it adopted unanimously. We are here to address an issue that has received too little attention, not only in this Chamber over the past six decades, but also, I would suggest, in all of our halls of Government across the world. It is an important issue that goes to the core of our commitment to ensure the safety of the United Nations Member States and their citizens.

Under the United Nations Charter, the 15 members of this Council bear primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. Satisfying that responsibility includes our protecting the lives and physical security of all people, including the women who comprise half the planet's population. This responsibility is particularly acute in circumstances where peace and stability are challenged.

Even though women and children are rarely responsible for initiating armed conflict, they are often war's most vulnerable and violated victims. The resolution we have adopted today represents a step forward in our global efforts to end violence perpetrated against women and children in conflict zones, and it builds on two prior Security Council resolutions — resolution 1325 (2000), which calls on all parties in conflicts to respect women's rights and increase their participation in peace negotiations and post-conflict reconstruction efforts; and resolution 1820 (2008), which affirms the ambitions set out in resolution 1325 (2000) and establishes a clear link between maintaining international peace and security and preventing and responding to sexual violence used as a tactic of war to target civilians. Yet, despite these actions by the Security Council, violence against women and girls in conflict-related situations has not diminished; in fact, in some cases it has escalated.

Reading the headlines, one might think that the use of rape as a tactic of war happens only occasionally or in a few places, such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo or the Sudan. That would be bad enough, but the reality is much worse. We have seen rape used as a tactic of war before in Bosnia, Burma, Sri Lanka and elsewhere. In too many countries and in too many cases, the perpetrators of this violence are not punished, and so this impunity encourages further attacks.

Last month, I travelled to Goma in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, where over 1,100 rapes are reported every month. I met with survivors of sexual violence, and the physical and emotional damage to individual women and their families from these attacks cannot be quantified, nor can the toll on their societies. The dehumanizing nature of sexual violence does not harm just a single individual, a single family or even a single village or a single group; it shreds the fabric that weaves us together as human beings. It endangers families and communities, erodes social and political stability, and undermines economic progress. We need to understand that it holds all of us back.

Also, our failure as an international body to respond concretely to this global problem erodes our collective effectiveness. So we must act now to end this crisis, not only to protect vulnerable people and promote human security, but also to uphold the legitimacy of this body.

The international community has made progress. Many peacekeeping mandates now include Security Council requests for strengthened measures to prevent and respond to sexual violence. In Chad and the Sudan, United Nations peacekeepers have clear instructions underscoring their responsibility to protect local populations against sexual and gender-based violence. I recently met with United Nations troops in Liberia, who provide an excellent example of the steps a United Nations mission can take, both through its own actions and in cooperation with the host Government, to prevent violence against women and girls. It is also very important that the United Nations Mission in Liberia includes an all-women police unit from India. That all-women police unit has helped to motivate more Liberian women to become police officers, and the Mission has launched a joint United Nations-Liberian campaign against rape.

These steps are essential but, alone, they are not sufficient. Resolution 1888 (2009) identifies specific steps that the United Nations and Member States can and should take to improve the Organization's response to sexual violence committed during situations of armed conflict. It calls on the Secretary-General to appoint a special representative to lead, coordinate and advocate efforts to end sexual violence. We expect that person to engage at high levels with civilian and military leaders to spearhead the United Nations activities on this front. It also calls on the Secretary-General to rapidly deploy a team of experts to work with Governments to strengthen the rule of law,

address impunity and enhance accountability, while drawing attention to the full range of legal venues that can be brought into play, including domestic, international and mixed courts that bring local and international judges and prosecutors together to strengthen local justice systems.

We must also recognize that ending conflicts outright is the most certain path to ending sexual violence in conflicts. So pursuing peace and successful post-conflict transitions should be our highest priority. In States where conflict is taking place and in those that are moving beyond it, local police must receive better training, the rule of law must be strengthened, and survivors must be ensured full access to justice and protection throughout the judicial process. We envision that the team of experts called for in the resolution will help us to strengthen initiatives like those.

Beyond the measures outlined in the resolution, the Security Council should take additional steps. Protecting women and children should be a critical priority for all troops who wear the blue helmet. To reflect this, new and renewed peacekeeping mandates should include language condemning sexual violence and giving further guidance to peacekeeping missions to work with local authorities to end it. We must seek to ensure that our respective military and police forces, especially those that will participate in peacekeeping missions, develop the expertise to prevent and respond to violence against women and children. This will be helped by increasing the number of women who serve in United Nations peacekeeping missions. When I visited the Mission in Goma, I was very impressed at how integrated it was in every way — staff from every country, every kind of person represented, and many women in the leadership as well as in the ranks.

Let us not forget that it is often women who lead the call for peace in communities shattered by violence. We have seen women in this role from Liberia, Rwanda and Northern Ireland to Guatemala. Even when they suffer terrible losses in conflicts they had no part in starting, women have the will to reach across divisions, find common ground and foster understanding. As they seek peace, so must we by making sure they are part of all efforts. So I urge United Nations Member States to make sure that their foreign assistance programmes include measures to prevent and respond to violence against women and children and to ensure that women are included in designing and implementing those programmes.

In his speech to the General Assembly last week, President Obama challenged nations of the world to assume responsibility for the challenges confronting us.

Certainly, the challenge of sexual violence in conflict cannot and should not be separated from the broader security issues confronting the Council. It is time for all of us to assume our responsibility to go beyond condemning this behaviour and take concrete steps to end it, to make it socially unacceptable, to recognize that it is not cultural; it is criminal. And the more we say that, over and over and over again, the more we will change attitudes and create peer pressure and the conditions for the elimination of this violation.

When I was in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, I was told of an old proverb that says, "No matter how long the night, the day is sure to come". Well, I hope our work today, and every day going forward, will hasten the time when thousands of women around the world will be able to feel comfortable in walking the streets of their cities and villages freely again, to work outside their homes, collect firewood and water without fear, play with their children, spend time with their husbands and enjoy all the blessings of life in freedom, peace and security.

That is our dream for a better future for them and for us, and I thank this body for the strong commitment that this resolution represents.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council. I kind of like being a president, so this may go on a little longer than anticipated.

I now invite the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, to take the floor.

The Secretary-General: I am pleased to address the Security Council again on the subject of resolution 1820 (2008).

At the outset, Madam President, I would like to welcome you again to the United Nations. I would like also to commend your leadership and commitment on all the major goals and ideals of the United Nations, including this very important issue of women and peace and security.

Despite some progress in responding to sexual violence in armed conflicts, the deliberate targeting of civilians continues unabated, including on a widespread or systematic basis. Parties to armed

conflict continue to use sexual violence with efficient brutality. The perpetrators generally operate with impunity.

States and other parties to conflict must uphold their international legal obligations. The international community must do more to prevent violence, protect individuals, punish perpetrators and provide redress to victims.

With its resolution 1888 (2009) today, the Security Council is sending an unequivocal message — a call to action. It is an ambitious platform for intensifying this struggle. It builds on resolution 1820 (2008), which itself set a important precedent by recognizing the links between sexual violence and sustainable peace and security. I am fully committed to ensuring that the provisions of both resolutions are implemented, in partnership with all relevant stakeholders. I will continue to ensure effective follow-up by the United Nations system.

The Security Council's continued engagement will be crucial. My recent report to the Council (S/2009/362) offered a series of mutually reinforcing recommendations for action.

Sexual violence — in armed conflict or, indeed, at any time — should have no place and find no haven in the world. We must all do our part to fight and end discrimination against women and girls. The new gender entity recently agreed by the General Assembly should strengthen our work for women's empowerment; I have asked the Deputy Secretary-General to lead efforts to put that entity in place.

I will also continue to do everything in my power to advance gender equality among United Nations staff, including in my senior appointments.

Women's empowerment must be at the heart of our global work for peace and development.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General for his statement and for his support.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Bedouma Alain Yoda, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Regional Cooperation of Burkina Faso.

Mr. Yoda (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): My delegation is grateful to the Security Council presidency for the convening of this important meeting of the Council, at which the Council adopted resolution 1888 (2009) to follow up the implementation of resolution 1820 (2008), on sexual violence in areas of armed conflict.

We greatly appreciate the presence among us of the Secretary-General and his participation in this important discussion, as well as the valuable and unequivocal message he has sent on this topic. The special attention that the Security Council has devoted to the fate of women and girls living in areas of armed conflict reflects the international community's awareness of the harmful consequences of sexual violence against women and girls in conflict areas.

The momentum generated by the adoption of resolution 1820 (2008) has sounded the alarm about this scourge against the dignity of women, which undermines their ability to contribute to the maintenance of peace and social stability. The situation is grave: especially in conflict areas in Africa, in particular the Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, acts of sexual violence against women and girls in areas of armed conflict are taking on a worrisome magnitude, which the international community can no longer tolerate.

Such acts of violence against women fuel hatred among the warring parties and prevent the full participation of women in the process of post-conflict reconstruction.

The resolution the Council has just adopted under your leadership, Madam President, will enable us to equip the international community and the protagonists in armed conflict to better understand the consequences of this human tragedy and to shoulder their responsibility to protect human rights during times of conflict.

Burkina Faso has always endorsed all initiatives aimed at ensuring respect for human dignity, in particular the dignity of women, and at establishing a peaceful society free of all serious violations of human rights. In accordance with the ideals of peace and freedom set out in the Charter of the United Nations, Burkina Faso unreservedly supports the content of the resolution we have just adopted and reaffirms its thanks to the delegation of the United States and other delegations for their effort to achieve a balanced consensus text which can contribute to eradicating sexual violence in armed conflict.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Alain Joyandet, Minister of State for Cooperation and Francophonie of France.

Mr. Joyandet (France) (*spoke in French*): I welcome the convening, on the initiative of the United States presidency of the Security Council, of this public debate on the issue of women and peace and security, focusing on the fight against sexual violence in armed conflict. The worldwide fight against this scourge is a priority.

Sadly, right now the topic is a timely one. During the events of 28 September in Conakry, Guinea, many people were killed and women were raped in the streets of the city. France would like to alert the Council to the tragic situation that is currently taking place in Conakry.

The worldwide fight against this scourge is a priority of France's foreign policy. We are delighted by the commitment of the United States on this issue, and I in this regard I hail the personal efforts of Hillary Clinton.

This new resolution marks a decisive step for the protection of women in armed conflict, nine years after the Council's adoption of the groundbreaking resolution 1325 (2000), and one year after the adoption of resolution 1820 (2008). It will strengthen the genuine implementation of those resolution thanks to its coherent set of provisions.

First of all, the appointment of a special representative of the Secretary-General to direct the fight against sexual violence in armed conflict is a major step forward, aiming to ensure the coherence of United Nations action with the support of United Nations Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict. We hope that this post will be created as soon as possible. We would like to see the appointment of a person with experience in the field and real knowledge of the issues of sexual violence. This person should also be in a position to be a voice for the voiceless — that is, the victims of these atrocities. We hope that the Secretary-General's report to identify possible improvements in the coherence of United Nations action, which will be put together over the next three months, will permit the new special representative to gain time when taking up the post.

Next, the creation of a team of experts charged with helping Governments in need will help bolster national authorities with high-level technical expertise available from within the United Nations or made available by nations that so desire.

Within the sphere of peacekeeping operations, newly inaugurated women's protection advisers, whose mandate will be to monitor and follow-up on situations, will complement the actions of gender counselors. France will take a particular interest in ensuring the implementation of this measure. It is also essential that sexual violence be subject to specific follow-up in the reports on peacekeeping operations and the in annual report of the Secretary-General, including information on parties to armed conflict who commit sexual violence in situations that are on the Council's agenda, so as to provide more data and information, which for the moment remains too fragmentary.

I hope to have convinced everyone of the coherence of the set of provisions the Council has established with this new resolution, which include: the special representative; the Secretary-General's report to be completed within three months, to strengthen the effectiveness of the United Nations; the team of experts to better prevent and deal with sexual violence in States where it is necessary; strengthening the contribution of peacekeeping operations through the creation of the post of women's protection counselors; and annual reports by the Secretary-General so that the Council has adequate information, which is an essential prerequisite for its actions.

Allow me to highlight now France's commitment to two complementary elements in this plan: the mechanism for the protection of children in armed conflict; and the need for the Council to decide to impose sanctions where necessary to combat impunity. First of all, we must make use of the possibilities offered by the Council's Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict. This Group makes it possible to consider problematic situations, to make recommendations and, in case of persistent non-compliance with its recommendations by belligerents, to consider adopting sanctions by the Council. This is a unique mechanism whose effectiveness on the ground is real.

I welcome the very significant institutional progress made by the adoption last month of resolution 1882 (2009), which, inter alia, expanded the monitoring and reporting mechanism of resolution 1612 (2005) to include sexual violence committed against children, independent of the question of whether or not child soldiers are present. While this mechanism applies to children, it can nevertheless make a useful contribution to combating sexual

violence against women. Just one figure allows us to grasp the relevance of such an approach: It is estimated that 60 per cent of the women raped in the Democratic Republic of the Congo are minors. In this respect, transparency, cooperation and coordination of efforts between the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and the new special representative of the Secretary-General on sexual violence and armed conflict will be essential.

We must also accept the idea that without genuine punishment there can be neither prevention nor deterrence. Here, France welcomes the work done by the sanctions committees. Pursuant to the commitment made in resolution 1820 (2008) the Council must systematically consider the possibility of including sexual violence as grounds for sanctions when creating or reviewing the mandates of these committees. When the grounds exist, it is up to the experts to cite them. With this in mind, last March, together with Belgium, the United Kingdom and the United States, we supported the inclusion by the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1533 (2004) concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo of four members of the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda on the list of persons subject to individual sanctions.

Finally, France is pleased that the fight against sexual violence was subject to particular attention during the Security Council's annual visit to Africa in May. At that time the Security Council successfully advocated with the authorities of the Democratic Republic of the Congo for the prosecution of five officers accused of sexual violence. The Council must remain mobilized on this issue.

In conclusion I would like to recall that it is our responsibility to develop programmes to assist victims, to offer them care and prospects for rehabilitation and to work to avoid their stigmatization. Meeting their needs means that they must be systematically consulted and involved in all phases of the programmes designed for them. Members may be assured that France fully associates itself with and will join in the implementation of specific projects to assist victims of rape and other sexual violence.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Mexico.

Mr. Heller (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for joining us at this important meeting of the Security Council. We would also like to welcome to the Council Chamber Mr. Bedouma Alain Yoda, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Burkina Faso, and Mr. Alain Joyandet, Minister of State for Cooperation and Francophonie of France.

I would like in particular to welcome you, Madam Secretary of State, and to acknowledge your personal commitment and leadership, which have created renewed impetus for the issue of the protection of women's rights and the prevention of all forms of violence against women. My delegation would also like to thank the delegation of the United States for leading negotiations on resolution 1888 (2009), which has just been adopted.

With the unanimous adoption of that resolution, the Security Council has reaffirmed its commitment to the protection of women in armed conflict. The significant number of delegations that joined in sponsoring this initiative shows that the international community is resolved to ensure that women and children no longer remain the principal victims of the armed conflicts which, deplorably, are occurring in many parts of the world.

Council members were able to see for ourselves the gravity of the acts of sexual violence against women and children in areas of armed conflict in the course of our visit to a number of African countries last May, in particular the Democratic Republic of the Congo. On that occasion we witnessed the consequences of these crimes for societies and their negative impact on efforts to find solutions to crisis situations and promote an effective process of national reconciliation. For that reason we wish to reiterate, as does resolution 1888 (2009), the primary obligation of all parties to an armed conflict to respect and to enforce at all times international humanitarian law, which grants special protection to women and children.

My delegation believes that the establishment of the post of Special Representative of the Secretary-General on sexual violence in situations of armed conflict will make it possible to improve the systematic and comprehensive attention that the United Nations pays in response to sexual violence in these situations.

This new mandate should work in a coordinated manner with other United Nations mechanisms and agencies in order to harness synergies and to prevent duplication. In particular, there is a broad relationship

between the objectives of resolution 1888 (2009) and resolution 1882 (2009), on children and armed conflict, which was adopted by the Security Council last August.

These common objectives must be duly explored with a view to providing comprehensive protection for all those who, due to their condition, suffer most from the consequences of armed conflict, that is, women and children. In the light of the aforementioned, we believe that the Security Council must also pay close attention to the ongoing negotiations on a composite gender entity within the framework of the General Assembly and decide to review the mandate of the Special Representative in a reasonable period of time and in the light of the results of the procedure outlined in General Assembly resolution 63/311.

While more can be done at the international level in order to prevent sexual violence in situations of armed conflict, the eradication of sexual violence will only be achieved if national capacities among those States that are addressing situations of conflict are improved with a view to bringing the perpetrators of such crimes to justice.

Therefore, one of the most relevant aspects of the resolution is the identification within the United Nations of a multidisciplinary team of experts who, when their assistance is required and with the consent of the State concerned, can be deployed to the field in order to work jointly with the Government and the United Nations system to undertake projects for technical cooperation to strengthen the rule of law, prevent impunity and address victims' needs.

It is clear that currently we have strong tools for preventing sexual violence in areas of conflict. The true challenge that we face is making full use of this array of instruments, if we truly wish to ensure that more women and children do not fall victim to the spiral of violence that is caused by armed conflict.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the United Kingdom.

Sir John Sawers (United Kingdom): I was struck by the words of the Foreign Minister of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the General Assembly last week. He said that acts of sexual violence committed against women and girls in the east of his country constituted the most shameful and serious crimes experienced by humanity in the twenty-first century. Those words were a powerful reminder of the challenge this Council faces as it takes forward work on the agenda set last year by resolution 1820 (2008).

Sexual violence is a crime for which individuals can — and must — be held responsible, however senior they are. Perpetrators of sexual violence know that one result of their crime is to destroy local communities and make lasting peace harder to achieve. That is often their intention, as continued conflict leaves the men of violence — and it is invariably men — in a position of dominance.

You saw that challenge first-hand during your visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Madam President. We are grateful for the strong leadership that you personally and that the United States has given on this agenda. The Secretary-General's presence here today signals his personal engagement. He has taken up the issue with passion, and I encourage him to persist.

And as Minister Joyandet reminded us, the Security Council mission to Africa in May made forceful representations to the Democratic Republic of the Congo leadership and we welcome the steps taken to bring to account officers of the Democratic Republic of the Congo armed forces who have been involved in sexual violence.

The United Kingdom welcomes the resolution we have unanimously adopted today. It further strengthens our collective commitment to end impunity for sexual violence. The resolution gives new coherence to United Nations efforts through the initiative, UN Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict. It provides new leadership to combat sexual violence, through the creation of a special representative of the Secretary-General. It creates new steps to name and shame parties to armed conflict that perpetrate sexual violence. It calls on the United Nations to boost its support of national efforts to strengthen the rule of law, by deploying teams of experts in situations where sexual violence is occurring with apparent impunity. And it improves the information flow to the Council on patterns of sexual violence to allow us to develop specific, actionable responses.

In combination, these measures give us new tools to act on sexual violence. We welcome and support them, alongside the General Assembly's recent decision to form a composite United Nations gender entity. The key now will be implementation.

The Council has come a long way since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) nine years ago. It has taken time, too much time, for the United Nations to address the issue of systematic sexual violence in conflict. I would like to pay tribute to the pioneering work of Dr. Denis Mukwege and his colleagues at the Panzi Hospital in Bukavu, and Dr. Jo Lusi and his colleagues at the HEAL Hospital in Goma, where the women and children who have been raped and brutally defiled are given treatment and care.

I also commend the work of the many people around the world who have campaigned to raise the issue of sexual violence onto the political agenda: Eve Ensler, Lisa Jackson and the non-governmental organization, Women for Women, led by Zainab Salbi, have all played particularly valuable roles. And resolution 1820 (2008), making systemic sexual violence a war crime, was a landmark step forward.

But the problem persists, not just in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, but in conflicts across the globe. The events in Guinea this week are a cruel reminder of how rape and political repression go hand in hand.

The message from today's meeting should be that women can never be truly empowered while they remain threatened by sexual violence, and that peace cannot take root when half the community — the female half — lives in fear and trepidation. The Security Council must take up its responsibilities and never again relegate the question of systematic sexual violence to being a secondary issue. It is not. The measures we have adopted over the last two years, including today's resolution, now have to be pursued and implemented.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Costa Rica.

Mr. Urbina (*spoke in Spanish*): Madam President, Costa Rica recognizes your personal leadership and the efforts that your country has made in seeking to combat sexual violence in situations of armed conflict. We believe that the adoption of this new resolution is another firm step in the path that we began last year with resolution 1820 (2008) to stop the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war.

Costa Rica's position on this subject was made clear in the thematic open debate held on 7 August this year. For that reason, I will limit myself to highlighting only two points. The first point concerns the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and, the second, the team of experts we are establishing in this resolution 1888 (2009).

The appointment of a special representative of the Secretary-General to combat sexual violence will, without a doubt, play a strategic role in providing visibility to this fundamental issue and, above all, in helping to organize concerted action to combat sexual violence in situations of armed conflict.

We believe that it is necessary to harmonize this provisional mechanism with the setting up of the new composite gender entity established by the General Assembly in resolution 63/311, in order to avoid duplication and overlapping of functions. We believe that the Special Representative should be at the head of the United Nations campaign against sexual violence in conflict situations, UN Action, in order to make better use of the existing resources and capacities of the Organization. We hope that the enthusiasm generated by the establishment of this new instrument can be translated into tangible contributions to equip it with the necessary capacity to live up to the high expectations we all have for it.

In relation to the team of experts, we deem it extremely timely to create such an entity on the basis of such successful initiatives as the United Nations Standing Police Capacity. We deem such strategic interventions and technical assistance to be of utmost use in helping States to establish their own mechanisms to address the problem of sexual violence. We believe that it would be useful to assess the possibility of complementing and expanding these early and rapid response capacities with technical assistance for the strengthening of the rule of law and security sector reform.

In conclusion, I should like, on behalf of the Human Security Network, which is comprised of Austria, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Greece, Ireland, Jordan, Mali, Norway, Slovenia, Switzerland and Thailand, with South Africa as an observer, to express our gratification at the conclusion of the process that led to the adoption of this new resolution. As we said in our statement on 7 August, we commend the progress that the Security Council has made in its thematic discussions on this topic, and reiterate our conviction that it is necessary to continue working towards a comprehensive and strategic approach

focused on the critical areas of prevention, protection, the participation of women, accountability, assistance to victims and data collection, which we discussed in detail at our most recent debate on this topic.

The President: I call on the representative of Austria.

Mr. Mayr-Harting (Austria): I should like at the outset to thank you, Madam President, for your personal leadership in the fight against sexual violence in armed conflict. I should also like to thank Ambassador Susan Rice and the United States Mission in New York for the energy and determination they have demonstrated in conducting our work on this resolution in recent weeks.

We believe that this resolution will significantly contribute to strengthening the United Nations response to sexual violence in conflict situations. We see a particular need for the strategic leadership that a newly appointed Special Representative of the Secretary-General can provide. Her or his work will help us address this scourge on a systematic basis in each and every conflict situation where acts of sexual violence occur. With this goal in view, we also look forward to the upcoming proposals to be submitted by the Secretary-General on enhancing monitoring and reporting on sexual violence. I should like to add that we very much appreciate the personal commitment of the Secretary-General in this matter.

Today's resolution will, we hope, also pave the way for a much more systematic flow of information between United Nations peacekeeping missions and the sanctions committees of the Council on sexual violence in areas of conflict. Where necessary, the Council must ensure the accountability of those responsible for sexual violence in armed conflict, including through the establishment of commissions of inquiry, referrals to the International Criminal Court and the imposition of targeted measures.

At the same time, it is absolutely unacceptable that civilians, in particular women and girls, also continue to fall victim to sexual violence on a daily basis in conflict zones where United Nations peacekeeping missions have a key responsibility for their protection. The fight against sexual violence must therefore also be at the core of our overall civilian protection agenda. Austria thus pledges to take this work forward when the Council next considers the protection of civilians in armed conflicts during our presidency of the Security Council in the month of November.

The President: I call on the representative of Japan.

Mr. Takasu (Japan): I should like to extend a warm welcome to you, Madam, and to thank you for personally presiding over this important meeting of the Security Council. We are also grateful to the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General for their presence and their leadership.

Japan is pleased with the unanimous adoption of resolution 1888 (2009), and highly appreciates the initiative taken by the delegation of the United States. This resolution manifests the strong commitment of the Security Council to combating sexual violence, which is still prevalent in so many conflict areas in the world. The resolution provides significant added value to last year's milestone resolution 1820 (2008). It calls on us to meet urgent needs on the ground and to transform our commitment in action. In particular, it enhances a coordinated United Nations response to sexual violence in armed conflict and strengthens United Nations support for national authorities in strengthening the rule of law.

We need first of all to strengthen measures to protect victims of sexual violence, but we must also end the impunity enjoyed by violators. At the same time, I should like to emphasize the importance of supporting and empowering women and children in vulnerable situations. We need to support them in realizing their full potential, even under difficult circumstances, through the provision of health services, education and vocational training, and to ensure the recurrence of conflict and sexual violence is avoided.

In the general debate last week, Prime Minister Hatoyama stressed the value of the human security approach, that is to say, not only to protect but to empower every individual to live in safety and dignity. I believe that the human security approach could provide useful guidance on assisting women and children in armed conflict. From this point of view, Japan once again welcomes the adoption of resolution 1888 (2009).

The President: I call on the representative of the Russian Federation.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I thank you, Madam, welcome you to the

Security Council. Because this is the last meeting of the September presidency of the United States, I should like to express appreciation to the Permanent Representative of the United States, Ambassador Susan Rice, and the entire American delegation for their effective leadership of the Council and for having brought a number of important and relevant issues before the Council. The Russian Federation has actively worked to contribute to the success of this undertaking.

The Russian Federation welcomes the adoption of resolution 1888 (2009) by the Security Council. This document, we believe, completes and complements previously adopted resolutions on the subject of women and peace and security, resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008).

We see sexual violence as an appalling crime that requires decisive condemnation and harsh punishment. Of particular concern are situations in which this phenomenon is widespread and systematic. We are convinced that we must not lower our attention to other forms of violations of the rights of women and violence against them in situations of armed conflict.

In this connection, Russia is in favour of a comprehensive approach to addressing these problems. The diverse nature of violence requires due attention to be given to all categories of violence. This is in the spirit of resolution 1325 (2000), which remains the foremost guideline for protecting women and ensuring their rights in conflict. We are convinced that these issues should be looked at in the context of all issues related to gender equality.

We should recall that an important prerequisite for overcoming violence against women is the full participation of women themselves in peace negotiations and post-conflict reconstruction. In this context, the Russian Federation welcomes Viet Nam's initiative to hold an open meeting of the Security Council on 5 October on the subject of the comprehensive implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), with a focus on the role of women in post-conflict reconstruction.

In conclusion, we express our conviction that, working together, we will be able not only to lower the incidence of sexual violence in armed conflict, but also to make significant progress in ensuring gender equality and improving the situation for women in the spirit of the Fourth World Conference on Women and the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly.

The President: I call on the representative of Viet Nam.

Mr. Le Luong Minh (Viet Nam): I thank you, Madam, and Ambassador Susan Rice personally, as well as the United States delegation for your efforts to strengthen the Council's commitment to combating sexual violence in armed conflict. The implementation of resolution 1820 (2008) since its adoption last year has achieved meaningful progress, most visibly in the markedly improved awareness of sexual violence across the United Nations system and the international community and in many conflict areas. The international community is increasingly recognizing the need to work together to effectively put an end to one of the most vicious and inhumane types of violence.

However, my delegation believes that formidable challenges remain, especially in implementing the resolution on the ground. This requires concerted efforts by United Nations bodies, Member States and other stakeholders to ensure a comprehensive approach to the issue of sexual violence, including, inter alia, its incorporation into the earliest stages of the peace process. In this connection, the strengthening of the United Nations coordination role is essential. We look forward to working with United Nations bodies, other stakeholders and other Member States towards this objective.

Having voted in favour of the resolution, my delegation confirms once again Viet Nam's strong commitment to ending sexual violence wherever it occurs. At the same time, we believe that resolution 1820 (2008) and resolution 1888 (2009), just adopted by the Council, should be implemented in close coordination with the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

Since women's empowerment is among the most effective tools for their protection, women's participation in peace, conflict resolution and post-conflict processes should be promoted to ensure that their weak voice is heard, their rights are respected and their urgent needs met. Measures to protect women and girls from sexual violence in conflict situations should also be designed as part of a broader comprehensive and strategic framework which covers social, economic and development issues. United Nations bodies and donors should be encouraged and helped to assist national Governments in building gender-related capacity and developing gender-sensitive programmes

to help survivors of sexual violence with services ranging from access to justice and relief from stigma and ostracism, to provision of mental and psychological health care.

It is equally important that women's physical security be supported by economic and social security through income-generation activities, education and involvement in decision-making. Toward this objective and in furtherance of the efforts the Council is taking today under the guidance of the President, Viet Nam, as the upcoming President of the Council, will convene an open debate on Monday, 5 October, on the theme "Responding to the needs of women and girls in post-conflict situations for sustainable peace and security". We look forward to active participation, meaningful discussions and a substantive outcome that will make the international community's efforts to protect the better half of humankind more complete.

The President: I call on the representative of Turkey.

Mr. Apakan (Turkey): I would first like to thank the United States delegation and in particular you, Madam, for your personal involvement and leadership in advancing the cause of women around the world and for your most commendable efforts in mobilizing the Council around the adoption of this important resolution today. I also wish to express our deep appreciation to the Secretary-General for his commitment to combating violence against women and re-energizing the entire United Nations system in that direction.

Today, with the adoption of resolution 1888 (2009), the Council has sent yet another strong message to the world at large that violence against women and children, particularly in situations of armed conflict, is not acceptable and that such acts will never be tolerated. Your presence here today, Madam, amplifies this message and further solidifies our resolve. Indeed, the women and children who continue to be subjected to the cruelest forms of violence during armed conflict shall hopefully see that they are not alone in their plight and that the international community will spare no effort to stop their suffering.

This is why Turkey has supported this resolution from the very beginning and actively contributed to its negotiation, bearing in mind the Council's primary responsibility for the protection of civilians in times of armed conflict, in particular women and children.

The resolution we have adopted today has many important aspects, but maybe its most significant added value derives from its action-oriented nature. Indeed, in the resolution we not only condemn those who perpetrate acts of violence against women, but also call for action against them. With the establishment of a new mechanism and the decision to appoint a special representative in particular, the United Nations and the international community have demonstrated their firm commitment and political will to effectively preventing sexual violence against women, combating impunity and enforcing accountability and the rule of law.

Turkey is fully committed to exerting every effort in order to ensure the effective implementation of the resolution. Together with resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008), resolution 1888 (2009) provides us with a comprehensive framework for empowering women, and we will do our utmost to make the best use of this opportunity.

The President: I call on the representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

Mr. Shalgham (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I wish to thank you, Madam, and to convey our appreciation for your initiative. I also greet Ambassador Susan Rice and thank her for her efforts and wise leadership of the Security Council during the month of September, as well as for the initiatives and projects she has launched. I welcome the Ministers for Foreign Affairs who have joined us this morning.

The Council's visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and other African countries that have experienced long periods of conflict, and our meetings with a number of victims of acts of sexual violence and torture, were shocking for all of us. At the same time, we hold out great hope after meeting with young people from all regions of the world who are providing the victims with psychological and professional assistance. We feel that the human conscience is stronger and greater than those who commit such crimes. The will to live is stronger than the will to die.

The perpetrators of acts of violence do not simply kill their victims, but maim and defile the survivors irreversibly. As a result, it is essential that domestic legislation be adopted to ensure that those crimes do not go unpunished and that the perpetrators be brought to justice, as they incite hatred and violence.

The events that took place in Conakry, Guinea, yesterday and the stories we have heard from the poor and vulnerable women who have suffered and been raped, then tortured and killed, are truly horrific.

Therefore, I would like to thank you, Madam President, for this initiative, and the Secretary-General for his initiative in appointing a Special Representative for women and sexual violence in areas of conflict. Any criminal anywhere, whether in Afghanistan, in Iraq, in the Congo or in Palestine, must be brought to justice.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Croatia.

Mr. Vilović (Croatia): Allow me first to thank you personally, Madam President, and the United States delegation and Ambassador Susan Rice for the continuing leadership on the issue of sexual violence in armed conflict. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his steady engagement.

Croatia would like to add its voice to those who strive to put an end to that abhorrent practice. Since the representative of Croatia delivered a speech during the open debate on the implementation of resolution 1820 (2008) in August this year (*S/PV.6180, p.16*), allow me here merely to add some brief remarks.

First and foremost, I would like to state that Croatia was a strong supporter of resolution 1820 (2008) within the Council, from its conceptual phase to its ultimate adoption. In that same vein, we now give equal support to the new resolution 1888 (2009) that we have just adopted today, and we would like to take this opportunity to congratulate everyone who has worked so hard to gain that result.

With resolution 1888 (2009), the Security Council recognizes many important elements in the fight against sexual violence in armed conflict. It recognizes the need for civilian and military leaders to demonstrate political will in combating impunity and using their authority and powers to prevent sexual violence. It demands protection for civilians from sexual violence by all parties to an armed conflict and urges them to investigate all reports of sexual violence.

The members of the Security Council have had the opportunity to visit today's most affected areas and to talk to victims, and are fully aware of gravity of the problem. Moreover, the Security Council has reiterated its intention, when adopting or renewing targeted sanctions, to consider including designation criteria pertaining to acts of rape and other forms of sexual violence.

Notwithstanding those positive measures, we believe that the resolution's request to the Secretary-General to appoint a Special Representative to address the issue of sexual violence in armed conflict, as well as to rapidly deploy a team of experts to situations of particular concern with respect to sexual violence, deserves special praise.

In adopting resolution 1888 (2009), as well as through the recently adopted resolution 1882 (2009), the Security Council is sending a clear signal to those who continue to perpetrate horrific crimes against women and girls in armed conflict and to those who tolerate or condone such sexual violence. They will be held accountable.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Uganda.

Mr. Rugunda (Uganda): I welcome the fact that you are presiding over this Council meeting in person, Madam President. It is a demonstration of your commitment to the total elimination of sexual violence, which has been so prevalent, especially in a number of African countries. Uganda voted in favour of resolution 1888 (2009) because of our continued commitment to the welfare of women, and especially of girls, who tend to be the primary casualties in conflict situations.

Sexual violence is a global problem. Therefore, every effort must be made to ensure that the culprits are held accountable for their despicable actions. Once again, that is a reminder that sexual violence in conflict-related situations can be prevented if peace, stability and the rule of law are restored in the affected countries.

Uganda welcomes the resolution's recognition of the needs of national justice systems that have been weakened by conflicts and the understanding that, if the international community does not assist those institutions to rebuild their capacity, it is useless to call for an end to impunity or for the prosecution of war criminals or perpetrators of sexual violence.

Let me take this opportunity to thank Ambassador Rice and the United States Mission for spearheading the adoption of this resolution.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of China.

Mr. Zhang Yesui (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): First, I would like to thank you, Madam President, for presiding over today's meeting in person and the Secretary-General for the statement that he has just made.

China condemns all acts of violence against women in conflict situations, including sexual violence. We call on all parties to conflicts to abide by international humanitarian law and international human rights law. We call on Governments to investigate and punish the perpetrators of such crimes against women. We also call on all countries to adopt measures for their early accession to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

In view of the above, the Chinese delegation voted in favour of resolution 1820 (2008) in April last year and of resolution 1888 (2009) that we have just adopted. Here, we would like to express our appreciation for the efforts of Ambassador Rice and the flexible approach and constructive attitude of the United States Mission during the consultations.

With regard to improving the protection of women in armed conflict, I would like to underscore the following three points.

First, Governments bear primary responsibility for protecting women and combating crimes of sexual violence. The international community should provide effective assistance in that regard. While the primary responsibility for implementing resolutions 1820 (2008) and 1888 (2009) lies with Governments, both conflict-affected countries and those in post-conflict situations are often faced with many difficulties. Therefore, the international and donor communities should provide generous assistance to help their capacity-building efforts. At the same time, I would like to stress that the provision of external support and assistance should comply with the principles of the United Nations Charter and should respect the wishes of the country concerned while not undermining its sovereignty.

Secondly, women's participation in the different stages of a peace process should be strengthened and attention should be paid to their status and their role. The rights and interests of women must be respected and protected throughout the entire peace process and their special needs and concerns heeded. They should be given greater participation and more decision-making power. In recent years, the Secretariat has taken many positives steps to increase the number of senior women officials and female heads of United Nations special missions. We hope that those efforts will continue in the future.

Thirdly, efforts should be made to encourage and support the participation of civil society in the protection of women. Many colleagues in non-governmental organizations work on the ground under difficult conditions to promote the protection of women's rights and interests. Their work should be acknowledged. China supports them in their continuing constructive role to protect women in situations of armed conflict. We encourage them to continue their engagement with other United Nations agencies, especially those directly involved in women's issues, as well as to put forward reasonable proposals in that regard.

The Chinese Government has always paid great attention to improving the status of women and protecting their rights and interests. We would like to work together with the international community in our common effort to reduce acts of sexual violence in the world and to achieve the goals in the area of women and peace and security.

The President: There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Before I adjourn the meeting, I want to thank Ambassador Susan Rice, our Permanent Representative, and the United States Mission and all who work with her every day on behalf of our country. I also wish to thank Ms. Esther Brimmer, Assistant Secretary for International Organizations, and her staff, as well as Melanne Verveer, our Ambassador for Global Women's Issues. I also want to extend my best wishes to Ms. Norma Chan, Chief of the Security Council Secretariat Branch, who is retiring today after 36 years with the United Nations. We want to give Norma a proper send-off as she embarks upon a new chapter in her life. We thank her for her dedicated service.

Finally, let me thank all members very much, not only for their votes but also for their extremely helpful and substantive comments.

The meeting rose at 11.25 a.m.